Bible Biography

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THE GENERAL COUNCIL
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GENERAL COUNCIL
PUBLICATION BOARD
NO. 1522 ARCH STREET
PHILADELPHIA

BIBLE BIOGRAPHY

A PORTRAYAL

OF THE

CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT.

FOURTH GRADE TEXT BOOK IN THE LUTHERAN GRADED SYSTEM FOR INTERMEDIATE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

BY

J. E. WHITTEKER, D.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

BIBLE BIOGRAPHY is the fourth grade in our school system. Scholars are supposed to have gained a mastery of simple Bible scenes in the first year. They are supposed to have made a study of the running narrative in the second year. They are supposed to have acquired an insight into surroundings, customs, history and general background of the narrative in the third year. This year they turn to a study of the *characters* in God's Book. Character study in which motives and causes of action are seen to be put into execution and to lead to results in conduct, is extremely fascinating at the period of youth when reasoning powers begin to grow strong, and when the relation between cause and effect is noted with eagerness. This period happens to be the one when youth is busily engaged in the formation of habits which will ever afterward condition its activity. Bible Biography, rightly studied and taught, should leave a deep impression for a lifetime on the spiritual and moral nature of our students.

THEODORE E. SCHMAUK, *Editor.*

GENERAL COUNCIL GRADED SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION.

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PREFACE.

"For all Thy saints, O Lord,
Who strove in Thee to live,
Who followed Thee, obeyed, adored,
Our grateful hymns receive."

IN the preparation of Bible Biography, we have kept distinctly in view the age and acquirements of the boys and girls of our own Sunday-school who shall take up the study of this work with the approaching Advent Season. Nor have we been unmindful of the little group of teachers who shall lead their classes into the company of the great men and women of Bible days—Prophets, Priests and Kings; Fathers of Nations, Reformers and Founders of Empires; Apostles, Evangelists and Teachers—nay, even into the Holy of Holies, where they shall sit and speak with Jesus, watch His works and study His words. Upon the principle, "By one, know all," it is our sincere hope that in meeting the wants of our own school, we have met the wants of every Lutheran School in the land. In the development of this number of our Sunday-school Series, the aim has been the concise setting of the great Bible names in their proper relations, and thus, without sacrificing historic sequence, keep the work within the recognized limits of Biography.

May the noble lives here sketched incite the young people of our Church to lives equally noble; and may every grievous sin, recorded, teach them to shun sin for its own sake as well as shrink from its awful outcome. Thus shall they be elevated in thought and act; and live on a higher plane in the Church and before the world, to the blessing of their souls, the strengthening of Christ's Kingdom, and the glory of God's Name.

J. E. WHITTEKER.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, Rochester, Pa.

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CHAPTER I.

LIFE AND MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

John's Parents 1—The Angel's Visit 2—The Birth of John 3—John in the Wilderness 4—John's Preaching 5—John in Prison 6—The Death of John.7

IN the reign of Herod the Great, there lived in the uplands of Judea [a] a Temple-priest named Zacharias. His wife Elizabeth was also of priestly descent, a fact which brought two-fold honor to the family. Their home was distinguished by the highest sanctity of the age—a home where God was honored, and purity of life reigned, and a reverent regard marked every relation. But their sky was not without its cloud; for they were childless, and without the hope of children. This was not merely a disappointment: it was a reproach. Year after year, they had waited and prayed; but now, the evening of life had set in; the darkness of old age was gathering about them; and their family light would soon go out, never to shine again upon earth. So they thought; but God planned otherwise.

The week of Temple-duties once more called Zacharias to the Holy City. [b] As he took his place among the priests, arrayed in white official robes, the lot fell upon him to offer incense—the crowning honor of a lifetime of priestly service. Pouring the incense on the embers, the cloud arose—the symbol of the people's prayers—and the multitude of worshippers cast themselves down in silent devotion. And as he joined their supplications, a mysterious presence appeared before him. It was the angel Gabriel, bringing tidings of joy,

even the news that his prayers were heard and that his wife Elizabeth should bear him a son—his office, the herald of the coming Messiah; his life, that of a Nazarite. Meantime, the people stood without, waiting to be blessed. But when Zacharias returned, he stood dumb before them—making signs, but remaining speechless. The day's service was over; priests and people alike scattered; and when the week's ministrations were performed, Zacharias returned to his Hebron home.

At length, there was great rejoicing in the quiet home of Zacharias, and friends gathered in with glad greetings; for the child of prayer was born, the promised blessing had come. To the parents, the event had peculiar significance; for he was the son of their old age—God's special gift for a special mission. A Jewish child was named at its circumcision in the form of a prayer. And now, when the priest gave this babe his father's name, Elizabeth interrupted the ceremony, saying, "Not so; but he shall be called **John.**" In vain her friends appealed that no one of the family had that name; so they turned to the father, and he wrote, "His name is JOHN!" All were astonished at this—an astonishment that yielded to deepest awe; for now the tongue of Zacharias was loosed and he broke forth in a song of praise—a canticle known as *The Benedictus*, and having a place in our Early Service. The news of this marvellous event spread far and wide; new hope sprang up as people asked each other, "What manner of child shall this be?"

From infancy, John was subject to the holiest influences. The son of a priest, he early became acquainted with priestly duties; while the stately Temple-service must have strongly appealed to his serious nature. As

a Nazarite, he adopted a strictly ascetic life, and in process of time withdrew to the wilderness and lived like a hermit. The eastern part of Judea was a dreary waste, with rocks cleft by earthquakes, hills full of caves, and ridges void of vegetation.[c] Here John spent many years apart from the world—alone with God and the musings of his own soul. His hair was long, his clothing coarse, his food the fare of the desert. Here he could study the Law and the Prophets, not only in their relation to the past; but in the terrible picture they gave of the present, and their thrilling application to the future. He longed for the restoration of his people; and longing turned into hope, and hope into conviction; until he was driven from his wild retreat to call upon men to repent.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, John left his mountain retreat and came forth as a prophet of God. His very appearance would catch attention; while his cry, "Repent! Repent!" drew vast multitudes about him. He had a message, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" He enjoined a work, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." And then, he crowned it all with a sacred rite. He spoke of the axe to cut, the fan to separate, the fire to burn.[d] So he passed up and down the Jordan, sparing no man and striking everything to a common level. The hopes of the people were aroused: Elijah had surely come! So the Jews sent a deputation to him to ask, "Who art thou?" And he answered, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the LORD!"

A great wave of excitement spread over the land. People were stirred up to serious inquiry and the universal thought was, Surely the Christ will now come!

AND HE CAME! Leaving Galilee, he moved down to the Jordan and was there baptized of John. And now, John's ministry was practically at an end. Every rank had heard him; and all alike had felt the sharp cut of his stinging lash. He had been a shining light; but now the true light had come. And so, as the SUN arose, the Star grew dim! John had reproved Herod for his unlawful marriage. So a band of soldiers sought him in his retreat, seized him by night, and hurried him off to prison. The place was the famous Machærus,[e] a wonderful stronghold frowning down upon the Dead Sea. But John lay deep in a dungeon of living rock—cut off from the world, shut out from his work. Day and night, month after month, he lay in dungeon gloom. No wonder he sent to Jesus, asking, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

To please his wife, Herod would gladly have put John to death; but he feared the people. But finally the fatal day came. The anniversary of Herod's accession to the throne was at hand. It must be celebrated with great festivities. Brilliant lights, garlands of flowers, tables spread with every luxury, wine flowing freely—such were the unfailing attendants of royal feasts. Salome, the daughter of Herodias, broke all social restraints as well as those of decency, and danced in the presence of Herod and his guests. Her performance, no doubt, was one of those wild, wierd dances—a pantomime of some mythological subject. It charmed the company of revellers. Herod, in the heat of admiration, promised to give her whatever she would ask—pledging it with an oath. She conferred at once with her mother. This was Herodias' opportunity: at last she could have her revenge! So she told her daughter

to ask for the head of John the Baptist. Herod was startled at the bloody request; but for his oath's sake, he granted it. Summoning a soldier of the guard, he sent him to the prison on the errand of death. Without a moment's warning, the dreadful deed was done; and the horrible gift was brought on a charger to Salome; and she, in turn, took it to her bloodthirsty mother. Then came the disciples of John and took up the headless body and laid it in the tomb. Thus ended the life of him whom God had raised up to be the forerunner of His Eternal Son.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

Joseph and Mary [1]—The Annunciation [2]—The Birth of Jesus [3]—The Shepherds [4]—The Circumcision and Presentation [5]—The Recognition [6]—The Wise Men [7]—Herod's Revenge [8]—The Return from Egypt [9]—Before the Doctors. [10]

IN the ancient city of Nazareth, [a] midway between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean, there once lived a man named JOSEPH. He was a plain man—a carpenter by trade. But in his veins there coursed the blood of kings; for he was a direct descendant of David and legal heir to David's throne. In the same city there lived another man, also of royal lineage; but history does not even give his name. All that we know of him is that he had a daughter whose name was MARY, and that she was betrothed to Joseph. This betrothal was more than a private engagement: it was a civil contract preceding the religious rite of marriage; and so binding was it in the eyes of the Jewish law, that it could not be annulled except by a bill of divorcement.

About this time, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary.

with the message from heaven that she should bring forth a Son and call His name JESUS. Startled at the wonderful revelation, Mary at once resolved to visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea; for the angel had told her that Elizabeth also was favored of the Lord. The long wearisome journey being finished, the emotion of Mary's soul found expression in the words of *The Magnificat*—one of the grandest hymns that ever flowed from human lips. After a visit of three months spent in hallowed fellowship, Mary returned to her home in Nazareth and Joseph took her unto him as his wife.

At that time, the Emperor Augustus sat in state, with all the world at his feet ready to do his bidding. And so, when he sent out the decree that the whole world should be taxed,[b] the Holy Land, like all the lands ruled by Rome, hastened to obey. According to ancient custom, everyone was allowed to go to the home of his ancestors and there record his name. Since Joseph was of the house of David, he had to go to Bethlehem,[c] the city of David. Taking his young wife, he started on his long journey—a trip teeming with historic significance. On reaching Bethlehem, they found the village inn already full of visitors and were compelled to share some dismal corner that was given up to cattle. And there, in that lowly place, the Christ-child was born.

Since vast numbers of devout Jews visited Jerusalem each Passover Season, and these had to be provided with paschal lambs; the region about Bethlehem was largely used for pasture-ground.[d] It was no mean race of shepherds, therefore, that kept their flocks there. One night, as they were keeping watch, a sudden glory shone down upon them and an angel proclaimed the tid-

ings of the Saviour's birth. Then a multitude of the heavenly host joined in the song of praise, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"— the opening sentence of that ancient hymn, *The Gloria in Excelsis.* The echo of the heavenly chorus died away; the light faded from the hill-sides as the angels took their flight; and the earth once more lay in darkness. So the shepherds hastened to Bethlehem; and there those devout men, who kept the flocks for the great yearly sacrifice, by God's appointment now found the true Passover Lamb—even the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Eight days from the time of His birth, the Holy Child was circumcised. In connection with this ancient rite—which has given place to Holy Baptism—He formally received His divinely-given name JESUS, with its special meaning, "He shall save His people from their sins." Forty days after His birth, His parents took Him to the Temple to present Him to the Lord. Here He caught the attention of two devout people who recognized Him as the Consolation of Israel. The one was the aged Simeon. Taking the Child Jesus up in his arms, the fullness of his joy found expression in the words of *The Nunc Dimittis*—that song of rapture which our Church uses as the closing hymn in her Communion Service. The other was Anna, a prophetess of Galilee, who had left her northern home that she might dwell in the House of the Lord. She was a very aged woman and had spent the greater part of her life in lone widowhood. She, too, gave thanks to God and testified of the Child to all them that looked for Redemption in Israel.

After the presentation in the Temple, the Child Jesus

was carried back to Bethlehem. Meantime, strangers from the far-distant East entered Jerusalem and inquired for the birth place of the new-born king. They were Magi, commonly called "Wise Men"—an order well known in Arabia and other parts of the East. They were men of great learning and made a special study of the stars. They may have known the prophetic word of Balaam, the reputed founder of their order: "There shall come a STAR out of Jacob!" And now, witnessing a bright appearance in the western sky, they set out on their journey for Palestine and at length reached Jerusalem. And when they inquired for the new-born King, they were sent to Bethlehem to search for the Child. As they resumed their journey, the star again appeared and led them to the place where the young Child was. Entering the house, they fell down and worshipped Him, and with many a royal gift, honored Him as a king. This visit of the Wise Men is observed in the Church as *The Season of Epiphany*.

Herod[e] now began to suspect that a rival had risen to claim the throne. So he formed a crafty plan by which to compass his death. Being thwarted in his purpose, he next formed the murderous design of slaying every little child in Bethlehem; so that by the death of all, the ONE might not escape. The awful deed was quickly done; and sad is the picture that the sacred penman draws of the scene—"Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." But while this bloodthirsty king set himself against God and His Anointed, the Lord had Him in derision; for Joseph had fled with Mary and the Babe into Egypt,[f] beyond the reach of the tyrant's sword.

The stay of the Holy Family in Egypt was very brief; for Herod soon died. Returning to Palestine, they were minded to make their home at Bethlehem. But when they reached Judea and learned that Archelaus, a cruel-natured prince, ruled in his father's stead, they turned aside into Galilee and once more settled in Nazareth. Thus this quiet mountain town became the home of the childhood of Jesus. How He spent His early days is a matter of pure conjecture. The only record is that "He grew and waxed strong in spirit, and the grace of God was upon Him."

Joseph and Mary devoutly went to Jerusalem every year to the Feast of the Passover.[g] When Jesus had ended His twelfth year—now a "son of the Law"—He went up with His parents to this great feast. When the feast was ended and the company of Nazarene pilgrims turned their steps homeward, the Holy Child still lingered within the Temple-walls. Amid the crowd and confusion of travel, He was not missed till nightfall. After seeking Him in vain among their friends and kinsfolk, Joseph and Mary returned to the city sorrowing. On the third day, they found Him in the Temple, seated in the midst of the doctors, His whole soul absorbed in the Law and the Prophets. With a mild rebuke, Mary inquired why He had so dealt with them. Then came that lofty reply, the watchword of all His life, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Remarkable words to come from the lips of a child! They show already a budding consciousness, if not of divinity, at least of a divine commission. But at His mother's gentle reproof, He returned with His parents to their humble home in Nazareth and was again subject unto them. His "hour" was not yet come!

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY MINISTRY OF JESUS.

The Baptism of Jesus 1—The Temptation 2—The First Testimony 3—The First Disciples 4—The First Miracle 5—The First Passover 6—The First-fruits in Jerusalem 7—The First-fruits in Samaria.8

FOR four hundred years, the book of prophecy had been closed; but all at once a voice sounded through the wilderness, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" The cry of John was the call to Jesus. In answer, He left His Nazareth home, came to the Jordan,[a] and presented Himself for baptism. John hesitated; but Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now!" And as Jesus came up from the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven said, "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The voice of the Father, the dove-like descent of the Spirit, the visible presence of the Son, were an open manifestation of the three Persons of the one Divine Essence.

Jesus was now full thirty years old—the age at which the Levite entered the priesthood. He had been consecrated to its ministry; for the righteousness fulfilled in His baptism was the sprinkling of water upon Him according to the Law; while as The Christ, He was anointed with the Holy Ghost. But there was still a preparatory stage—the Temptation. So He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Forty days and forty nights this lasted, closing with three sharp onsets of the evil one. The first, "Command that these stones be made bread," was a

plea to make Him distrust God. The second, "Cast Thyself down," was designed to display His almightiness and dazzle the multitude. The third, "All these things will I give Thee," was a bribe to win the world by serving Satan. The first appealed to the natural appetite; the second, to His sense of divinity; the third, to the love of power. They are types of all temptation, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"—the same that was presented to Eve when she saw "that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise." But by the appeal, "It is written," Jesus drove the tempter from His presence.

Tidings had reached Jerusalem from the banks of the Jordan—strange tidings of a strange preacher who cried, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" So the Jews sent priests and Levites to find out who the man was, and what his mission. And when they asked, "Who art thou?" John answered, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness!" at the same time adding, "But there standeth ONE among you whom ye know not!" The next day, John bare direct witness to Jesus, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!"—the briefest possible summary of Christ's redemptive work. And the Church has embodied it in her Communion Service in the form of that beautiful prayer, *The Agnus Dei.* The keynote of the New Dispensation was sounded; the mission of John was finished; the ministry of Christ was begun.

The next day, as John was walking with two of his disciples, he saw Jesus coming and said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" And as they followed Jesus, He graciously turned and asked, "What seek ye?" They

inquired, "Where dwellest thou?" And He said, "Come and see." So they went and abode with Him that day.

One of these men was Andrew; the other, the beloved disciple John. And now, they went forth to spread the glad news that Jesus is the Messiah. Andrew hastened to his brother Simon and said, "We have found the Christ!" Then Philip was added to the list. With a like zeal, he found Nathanael and brought him to Jesus. Nathanael was from Cana, a few miles north of Nazareth. At first, he staggered at the thought of the Messiah coming from Nazareth; but when brought face to face with Jesus, he confessed, "Rabbi, Thou art THE SON OF GOD!" Then for the first time Jesus called Himself by that name which always seemed so dear to Him, "THE SON OF MAN!"

Three days after, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there; and Jesus and His disciples were invited. In the midst of the festivities, the supply of wine became exhausted. To save her friends from humiliation, Mary laid the case before her Son. But wonderful things had happened since she last saw Him—His baptism, His temptation, His entrance upon His ministry. She must learn that the old relationship has passed away and a new one has been formed; that His ways are no longer her ways nor His thoughts her thoughts. Yet he yielded to the seeming necessity and by His wonder-working power, turned water into wine. This was more than kindly relief from an embarassing situation. It put the stamp of divine approval upon innocent pleasures; gave a hallowed touch to the marriage relation; furnished His followers with a firm basis for their faith; and was the budding manifestation of His divinity.

After the marriage at Cana, Jesus went down to Capernaum, a city on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee.[c] Here was that magnificent synagogue whose scattered walls and broken columns still speak its early splendor. But it was time for the Passover, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. The Temple-scene which here met His eye filled Him with righteous wrath. The shouts of men mingled with the bleating of sheep and the lowing of cattle, had turned the sacred courts into a market-place. Such gross desecration stirred His soul to its very depths. Entering the polluted place, He made a scourge of cords, drove out the sheep and oxen, and lashed the money-changers from the Temple limits. And as He sent them forth, He said, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's House a house of merchandise." The Jews did not dare to question His authority; they merely asked for a sign. He replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up"—the deep meaning of which did not come to light till after His resurrection.

While at Jerusalem, Jesus performed many miracles. This led Nicodemus to come to Him by night, in order to learn something of His divine commission. So Jesus explained to him the deep things of God :—Regeneration —the new birth of water and of the Spirit; The Incarnation—Himself "The Son of Man" and "The Son of God;" The Atonement—signifying what death He should die. Add to this the Love of God and Faith in Christ, and you have the clearest, briefest statement of doctrine that ever fell from His sacred lips. From Jerusalem, Jesus went into the country districts of Judea, where multitudes flocked to Him. The disciples of John complained that all men were going over to Him; but

John humbly acknowledged, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

About this time, John was cast into prison. So Jesus decided to go into Galilee. In passing through Samaria,[d] He came to Sychar and sat down at Jacob's well to rest, while His disciples went to the village to buy provisions. Just then, there came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus revealed Himself to her as the Water of Life, plainly declaring that He was the Messiah and pointing out the true spirit and object of worship. And now, she hastened home with the news that she had met the Christ. Meantime, the disciples returned and urged Jesus to eat. But He could speak only of that heavenly food which consists in doing the will of God. Trusting the woman's report, many of the Samaritans believed—a blessed gleaning by the wayside.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST PART OF CHRIST'S GALILEAN MINISTRY.

Second Miracle at Cana[1]—Rejected at Nazareth[2]—Call of the Four[3]—A Day of Healing[4]—The Incurable Cured[5]—The Man at the Pool[6]—The Sabbath Controversy.[7]

LEAVING Sychar with its people of simple faith, Jesus again entered Galilee, taking up the cry of John, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" and striking the keynote of all true preaching, "Believe the Gospel." Pressing on to Cana, His miracle-working power was a second time put to the test. There lived at Capernaum an officer of the court,[a] whose son was lying at the point of death. Hearing of Jesus, he went to Cana to seek His healing help. Jesus said to

him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Then came that soul-cry that none but Jesus could interpret, "Sir, come down ere my child die!" And the answer, "Thy son liveth," went forth with healing power to cure the son's body and save the father's soul.

From Cana, Jesus went to Nazareth. Here He had spent His early days, toiling at His trade; and here He was to proclaim Himself publicly as the Messiah. On the Sabbath, He went into the synagogue. The same familiar faces were there, the same prayers were uttered, the same Scriptures read; but He, so changed! No longer the Son of Mary, but the Son of Man. The roll of the prophets being given Him, He turned to the Book of Isaiah and read those words which so clearly portray the work of the Messiah. And as He sat down and began to speak, the eyes of all were fastened upon Him and they wondered at His gracious words. But when He boldly declared, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," their wonder turned into wrath and their wrath into frenzy. Rushing on Him with one accord, they thrust Him from the synagogue, dragged Him out of the city and would have dashed Him over the brow of the hill, had He not in some unspeakable way awed them by a look of commanding majesty so that they fell back powerless as He passed through their midst. He had come unto His own; but His own received Him not.

Driven from His old home, Jesus went to Capernaum.[b] Down at the lake-side, four of His followers were attending to their boats—Simon and Andrew, James and John. Jesus approached, and entering Simon's boat, He began to teach the people as they thronged the shore. After He had finished speaking, He told Simon to launch out

into the deep and let down his nets for a draught." Tired and discouraged, they nevertheless obeyed, and immediately enclosed a great multitude of fishes. This made a profound impression upon these men. Peter, always quick in thought and act, fell down at Jesus' feet and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Then Jesus turned to Simon and said, "Fear not; from henceforth, thou shalt catch men."

Among His hearers on the following Sabbath, was a man with a spirit of an unclean devil. Tortured at the presence of Christ, the evil spirit cried out, "Let us alone!" at the same time confessing Him to be the Holy One of God. But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace!" Then at His command, "Come out of him!" there was one mighty paroxysm and the poor sufferer was free. At this revelation of power, the people turned to each other in startled amazement and said, "What is this?"—this word of authority! Leaving the synagogue, Jesus entered the house of Simon, whose wife's mother lay sick of a fever. Bending over the sufferer, He rebuked the fever and it left her; and she arose and ministered unto them. Hallowed feast where Christ is guest and one healed by Christ doth serve! And now the evening came. All day long the news had spread of what had happened in the synagogue and at Peter's home. And so, as soon as the Sabbath was past, people brought their loved ones—the sick and suffering—and laid them at Simon's door; and Jesus healed every one of them. Early next morning, He went into a desert-place; and there, in the solitude of the wilderness, turned to God in prayer. The people followed and begged Him not to leave them; but He told them that He must minister to others also. So He went forth, preaching

in all their synagogues, healing the sick, and casting out devils.

The fame of Jesus had even reached the lepers—those poor outcasts in the tombs. One of them, with the boldness of despair, sought the Wonder-worker, fell on his face before Him, and cried in piteous appeal, "Lord if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean!" Jesus touched him, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. After a season of prayer, He returned to Capernaum. Four men brought a paralytic[d] to Him; but the doorway of the house where He was teaching was so blocked that they could not get near Him. Climbing to the house-top, they opened the roof and let the sick man down before Him. Then said Jesus to the paralytic, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"—blasphemous words to Scribes and Pharisees; for none but God can forgive sins. Reading their thoughts, Jesus bade the man rise, take up his bed, and walk. So he arose and went forth before them all. The Lord had indeed visited His people.

Another man was now added to the disciples—Levi, commonly called Matthew. He was a publican, a receiver of customs; but when Jesus said "Follow Me!" the man left all and followed Him. Shortly after, Jesus went to Jerusalem "to a feast of the Jews." In the Holy City was a pool called Bethesda.[e] Around it were five porches which sheltered the sick who came to enjoy its healing waters. Here Jesus cured a helpless invalid, at the same time telling him to take up his bed and walk. As it was the Sabbath day, the Jews took the man to task for his apparent wrong-doing. And when they learned that Jesus had bid the man carry his bed, the whole hate of their hearts was stirred up against Him. In defence, Jesus claimed that He was the Son of God,

doing only what His Father had done. But this intensified their rage. Then He spoke of the love of the Father and the honor accorded the Son; and closed with a noble testimony to John the Baptist, and an appeal to the Scriptures.

On a certain Sabbath, as Jesus passed through a field of grain[f] with His disciples, they began to pluck the ears of grain and to eat. The Pharisees, who daily dogged His steps, upbraided Him for their act. In answer, He referred them to what David had done when he was hungry, and what the priests were accustomed to do in the Temple service. Then to rebuke their legalism, He declared that "The Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath," staggering them with the startling climax that, as Lord of the Sabbath, it is His right to use it as He wills. Soon after, He gave new offence. Among His hearers, one Sabbath, was a man with a withered hand.[g] The Pharisees called His attention to this man and asked, "Is it right to heal on the Sabbath days?" In reply, Jesus called upon the man to stand up and place himself in their midst. Then turning to them, He said, "One thing I will ask you; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" That was a double stroke! Was it wrong for Him to save this poor man's life? Was it right for them to try to destroy His life? And then, looking around upon them all as if to challenge objection, He commanded the man to stretch forth his hand. With the divine command went divine power; and the man stretched forth his hand and it was made whole as the other. This miracle of mercy filled His enemies with madness. But Jesus withdrew to the seaside, healing the sick and casting out devils.

CHAPTER V.

SECOND PART OF CHRIST'S GALILEAN MINISTRY.

Choosing the Twelve 1—Sermon on the Mount 2—The Widow's Son 3—John's Message 4—Circuit in Galilee 5—The Parables 6—Stilling the Tempest 7—Raising Jarius' Daughter 8—Mission of the Twelve.9

WE have now reached a turning-point in the life of Jesus. A decisive step must now be taken. So He withdrew from Capernaum, went up into a neighboring mountain,[a] and there continued all night in prayer. It was one of those great solitary soul-struggles through which He so often passed. When morning came, He chose twelve men whom He would send forth to preach the Gospel. Of these, there are three groups:—(1) Simon Peter and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee and John his brother. (2) Philip, and Nathanael—also called Bartholomew; Matthew, surnamed Levi, and Thomas—also called Didymus. (3) James the son of Alphæus and Judas Lebbæus, surnamed Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanite, or Simon Zelotes; and Judas Iscariot. These, then, are the men whom Jesus would instruct in the things of the kingdom of God.

Jesus at once began to tell His disciples about His kingdom—its constituent elements, its relation to the old law, its demands upon His subjects. This is known as the Sermon on the Mount. It sets forth the true relationship between man and God, and draws a striking contrast between Christian life and Jewish legalism.[b] It contains:—(1) A series of eight Beatitudes (2) A comparison of the new law of mercy with the

old law of retribution. (3) A thrust at Pharisaic formalism—alms should be given secretly, not with vain show; prayer should be in solitude, not in self-righteous publicity; fasting must not be a thing of proud display, but of private self-denial. (4) The general effect—making us charitable in our judgments, careful in our use of holy things, and ready to give with liberal hand. (5) It is a strait gate and a narrow way; but it is the only true way. By it, men are to be judged as a tree by its fruit. Our Church has placed *The Beatitudes* as a word of comfort in her Funeral Service; while *The Lord's Prayer* is always added to every Chief Prayer, and forms one of the Five Parts of Luther's Catechism.

In the army of Herod Antipas, was a centurion[c]—a Gentile by birth, but a lover of the Jewish nation. It was he who built that beautiful synagogue[d] at Capernaum. This man had a very sick servant, and in his extreme straits, he appealed to Jesus. But with a sense of Jesus' majesty and almighty power, he sent word to Him that he was not worthy to have Him come under his roof, and asked Him to speak the word only and his servant should be healed. And with a word, the servant was made whole! The day after, Jesus went to Nain,[e] a town of Galilee not far from Samaria. As He drew near, the only son of a poor widow was being borne to the grave. When Jesus saw the mother's grief, He was filled with tender pity, and at His word, the dead sat up and began to speak. The people were filled with awe. No such work had been wrought in Israel since the days of Elisha who, near that very place, had raised the Shunammite's son to life.

In the depths of his dungeon, John had heard of Jesus' works; but giving way to doubt, he sent messengers to

Him with the question, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" In reply, Jesus pointed to His works, which bore the prophetic marks of the Messiah. When the messengers had departed, Jesus pictured the glory of John in the height of his popularity, when people crowded the Jordan to hear him preach and receive his baptism. As He sat at meat in the house of Simon the Pharisee, a woman who had lived in sin, came in deep contrition and washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her flowing hair. Then she opened a box of precious ointment and poured its contents upon His feet. Meantime, the Pharisee reasoned thus: "This man, if he were a prophet, would know what kind of a woman this is; for she is a sinner." In answer to his thought, Jesus uttered the parable of the Two Debtors, with its great lesson on redeeming love; delicately hinting that the simple overflow of her heart gave far more evidence of repentance than all the formalities of his rich feast.

In His second tour through Galilee, Jesus was attended by a band of devoted women who followed Him with loving gratitude and ministered to His wants. So absorbed was He with His work, that His friends began to suspect that he was beside Himself. As He cured one possessed with a devil, the people asked, "Is not this the Son of David?" But the Pharisees said, "He casteth out devils through the prince of devils." Jesus showed them that His works were opposed to Satan and so would not be aided by him. He even hinted that they wilfully withstood the truth, thus sinning against the Holy Ghost. Then they tried to entrap Him by asking for a sign from heaven. He met them with stinging condemnation, warning them that no sign should be

given them but the sign of the prophet Jonah. While He taught the people, drawing sharp distinctions between moral reform and spiritual renewal, His mother and brethren came to see Him. This led Him to declare that the bond of true kinship consists in hearing the word of God and keeping it.

About this time, Jesus spoke those parables[f] which form the structural part of almost all His teachings. Two things are remarkable about them—their concise form and simple style. The Prodigal Son, The Good Samaritan, The Lost Sheep—all, in fact, hang like pictures on memory's wall, ever fresh and true. Jesus did not travel far for His illustrations; He picked them up at His very feet—the farmer sowing grain, the shepherd and his sheep, the woman with her broom, the children playing in the market, an old broken bottle, a new patch on an old garment—the philosophy of house and farm and market-place. No wonder people followed Him in crowds! No wonder they said, "Never man spake like this man!"

After a day of healing and teaching, Jesus took ship with His disciples for the other side of the lake. Wearied with toil, He lay down in the hinder part of the ship and soon fell asleep. And as He slept, a violent storm arose. The disciples were filled with dismay, and rushing to their sleeping Master they cried, "Lord, save us; we perish!" Jesus arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.[g] Landing on the eastern shore, He was met by two demoniacs.[h] Night and day, they rent the air with their demon cries, cutting their flesh with sharp stones—poor bleeding madmen! In one of these men was a legion of devils; but at the command of Jesus, they came forth, entered into a herd

of swine, which rushed down into the sea and perished in its waters.

After Jesus recrossed the sea, Levi made Him a great feast. And as He sat at meat, Jairus, president of a synagogue, entered the house and cast himself at Jesus' feet. He had an only daughter, a little girl twelve years of age, and she was lying at the point of death. And he implored Jesus to come and lay His hands on her that she might live. On the way, the people thronged Him —among them, a woman who had suffered twelve long years with a distressing disease. She worked her way through the crowd, touched the hem of His garment, and was immediately cured of her infirmity.[i] At that moment, messengers came with the news of the little girl's death. But Jesus went into the house, took her by the hand and said, "Maiden, arise!" And at His word, the little girl arose.[j]

Jesus now paid another visit to His native town and went into their synagogue to teach. But the people were hardened against Him; for was He not the carpenter, the son of Mary? And His brothers and sisters, were they not with them? So He could do no mighty work there. We now come to a new stage of disciple life—the Twelve are to go forth on a mission tour by themselves. For this great work, Jesus gave them special instructions and sent them forth two by two. After their departure, He took another tour through certain districts of Galilee, teaching and preaching in their cities. About this time His fame had reached the ears of Herod. That wicked ruler had put John the Baptist to death; and now conscience-stricken—Sadducee though he was—he trembled at the thought that John had risen from the dead.

CHAPTER VI.

THIRD PART OF CHRIST'S GALILEAN MINISTRY.

Feeding the Multitude [1]—Walking on the Water [2]—At Capernaum [3]—The Cyro-Phœnician Woman [4]—The Transfiguration [5]—Answering Questions [6]—Feast of Tabernacles [7]—The Seventy.[8]

WHEN the Twelve returned, Jesus called them away to the quiet of the wilderness to rest. Another period of His ministry was ended; a new one must be begun. Crossing the lake, He entered a desert place bordering the city of Bethsaida.[a] Eager crowds gathered on the shore to greet Him when He landed. What could He do but tell them of the kingdom of God and minister to their sick! The day quickly passed, the night was at hand, and the people had nothing to eat. So he fed the multitude by the miracle of the loaves and fishes;[b] then sent the disciples to the other side while He dismissed the people; after which He retired to a desert place to pray. When the disciples put out to sea, the wind was against them; and toiling all night, they were unable to land. At the moment of extreme distress, Jesus came to the rescue, walking on the water. When they saw Him, they were filled with terror; but at His call, Peter boldly stepped out on the surging billows to go to Him. Seized with fear, he began to sink; when Jesus caught him by the hand and brought him safely into the boat. Wonderful manifestations of divine power! No wonder the disciples worshipped Him, saying, "Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God!"

Returning to Capernaum and entering the synagogue, Jesus preached—not of that bread which perisheth, but of Himself as The Bread of Life. And when He boldly declared, "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life," many turned away and said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" And, as they began to leave Him, He appealed to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" Then Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!" Again the Passover was at hand; but Jesus did not go up to the feast because the Jews sought to kill Him. As His popularity arose among the people, the enmity of the rulers grew more fierce. So He kept from the crowds and gave His time to the Twelve, revealing those truths that pertain to His person and work, and breaking the terrible news that The Son of Man must needs suffer.

After rebuking the Pharisees for setting the traditions of men above the commandments of God, Jesus went to the borders of Tyre and Sidon.[c] Here he was met by a woman of the Syrian Phœnicians, who pressed her appeal for Christ's healing power with a persistency that is almost without a parallel, willing to be classed with dogs, even, if only she could have the dog's share from the Master's table. Leaving this region of the Gentiles, He journeyed again to the Sea of Galilee by way of Decapolis. Here He healed a deaf man—the one remarkable thing about the cure being the successive steps in its accomplishment. Again He fed the multitude by His miraculous power—four thousand being satisfied in the wilderness. Then dismissing them, He entered into a ship and came to Magdala,[d] a village at the south end of the plain of Gennesaret.

Crossing the sea with His disciples, Jesus warned them against the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Passing north to Cæsarea Philippi,[e] a hill-town at the foot of Mount Hermon, He drew from Peter that notable confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" And now He spoke plainly of His Passion: but when Peter remonstrated, He met him with the sharp rebuke, "Get thee behind Me, Satan!" Six days after, He sought the mountain solitudes, taking with Him Peter, James and John. There, as He gave Himself up to prayer, His face shone like the sun, His raiment became white as the light. And as the disciples sat and gazed in hushed amazement, Moses and Elias appeared, clothed in heavenly splendor, and talked with Him. Then Peter, whose impulsive spirit had been subdued into silence, broke the mountain stillness as he cried, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee and one for Moses and one for Elias." And as he spake, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from heaven declared the Divine Sonship of Jesus. Filled with terror, the three fell upon their faces; but at the gracious touch of their Master, they arose and found themselves once more alone.

The Transfiguration raised the question as to the coming of Elias: but Jesus assured the three that this had already been fulfilled in John the Baptist. And now follows a scene in distressing contrast to the glory on the Mount—an only son in the power of a demon, foaming and gnashing his teeth and swooning away! With a word of command, Jesus drove out the evil spirit and delivered the child to his father. As He journeyed with His disciples from the mountain district down to the sea,

He gave them a fuller account of His approaching Passion. Then came the call for tribute, which was satisfied by Peter catching the fish with the money in its mouth.[f] A question of rank now arose, provoked, it may be, by the pre-eminence given to Peter, James and John: Jesus answered it by placing a little child in their midst as a model of innocence and unselfishness. John had found one casting out devils and had forbidden him. Jesus said, "Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is on our part." Then Peter wanted to know how often an offender should be forgiven. The traditional law had set the limit at three. Peter thought that seven would surely satisfy the higher law of Christ. But the Master put it beyond all limit, illustrating the case by the parable of The Unmerciful Servant.[g] Thus the disciples were edified, and put in preparation for the startling events which so soon would face them.

The Feast of Tabernacles[h] was at hand—a memorial of the days when Israel dwelt in tents. Jesus did not go up at the opening of the feast, but shortly before its close, quietly moving among the people and even teaching in the Temple. At the last day of the feast, He lifted up His voice in earnest appeal and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." This gave rise to sharp dispute as to who He was. Officers were sent to arrest Him, but they returned confessing, "Never man spake like this man!" The great Jewish Council met; but even here was found a man to plead His cause. So He withdrew, unmolested, to the Mount of Olives. Returning next day to the Temple where he dealt so graciously with the adulteress and so completely confounded her accusers. He again taught the people, declaring Himself to be the Light of the

world—the One whose day Abraham rejoiced to see. At this, they took up stones to cast at Him; but He mysteriously passed from their presence. About this time, He healed the man who had been blind from his birth, and over whose cure there was such a bitter contention. This drew from Him that sublime discourse about The Good Shepherd,[i] which led to renewed dispute. Then, when the feeling of frenzy had reached its highest tension, He left Jerusalem and returned to Galilee.

Jesus now "set His face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem." Starting on His final journey from Galilee, He sent messengers into a village of Samaria; but in bitterness of spirit, the Samaritans rejected Him. James and John wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume them; but Jesus rebuked them, saying, "I am not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." As they journeyed, a Scribe came with loud professions of readiness to follow Him; but Jesus put the test of His own poverty to him, which proved the shallowness of his love. Others came in a half-hearted way; but Jesus showed them that nothing short of undivided devotion was acceptable. He now made choice of seventy men whom He sent forth two by two, endowing them with gifts of healing and enjoining them to preach the coming of the kingdom. In due time, they returned rejoicing in the wonderful works they had done; but Jesus told them they should rather rejoice because their names were written in heaven.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PEREAN MINISTRY.

Teaching by Parable [1]—The Feast of Dedication [2]—Miracle and Parable [3]—The Raising of Lazarus [4]—On the Way to Jerusalem [5]—At Bethany.[6]

AFTER sending out the Seventy, Jesus crossed the Jordan and entered Perea. A lawyer came to Him with a question about eternal life. Jesus laid down the law of love and illustrated it by the parable of The Good Samaritan.[a] A rich young ruler came running to Him with a like appeal. Jesus told him to part with his wealth and become His disciple. This suggested to Peter the strange question, "What shall we have?" He received an answer that assured him of all heaven for his following. Another wished to learn how to pray: Jesus gave him the form which He had taught His disciples, and added a parable on the efficacy of prayer. Then comes the beautiful scene when mothers brought their little ones to Him, and He took them up in His arms and blessed them. This is followed by a series of rebukes—the mild reproof of the woman who proclaimed the blessedness of His mother; the sharp rebuke of the Pharisee who stickled for little formalities; the unsparing lash that He laid upon the lawyers in condemnation of their teaching and practice. He next condemned the spirit of covetousness by the parable of The Rich Fool;[b] while the fate of certain Galileans called forth the parable of The Fig Tree.[c]

From Perea, Jesus passed over into Judea and went up to Jerusalem. Here He took part in the Feast of Dedication—that joyous festival which commemorated the purification of the Temple and rebuilding of the altar after its defilement by heathen worship. It was

probably on the way to this feast that He visited Bethany, when Martha was troubled with much serving while Mary sat at His feet and listened to His gracious words. Entering the Holy City, He joined the people in their festivities. As the Jewish leaders gathered around Him in Solomon's Porch,[d] they asked Him to tell them plainly if He were the Christ. But when He told them of His oneness with the Father, they charged Him with blasphemy and took up stones to stone Him. Passing through their midst, He withdrew beyond the Jordan to the place where John had baptized. Here the people came in crowds to listen to His preaching; and many became His disciples. With Jerusalem and Judea and all Galilee closed against Him, the only place of security was the half-heathen district of Perea. Surely His hour was fast approaching!

On the journey to the Jordan, "a chief Pharisee" had Jesus at meat in his house on the Sabbath day. Among those present was a man afflicted with the dropsy. Some lawyers and Pharisees were there, and they watched Jesus to see if He would heal this man on the Sabbath. Jesus took the man and healed him, and in justification of His act appealed to what they would do to save the life of an ox or an ass.[e] Then He spoke a parable to teach the lesson of unselfishness and humility. This, with the parable of The Great Supper,[f] was so direct that there was no escape from its personal application. But the common people were gathered about Him; and they, too, must be taught. To them He spake the parable of The Lost Sheep,[g] The Lost Coin,[h] The Prodigal Son,[i]—all setting forth the love of God for the wayward and wandering, and His readiness to seek them out and save them. By the parable

of The Unjust Steward,[j] He also taught them the faithful use of every earthly trust; while in the case of The Rich Man and Lazarus, He lifted the veil from the future world and showed the righteous retribution that is meted out to men there.

Sad news came from Bethany—the news that Lazarus was sick, but Jesus still tarried in Perea. Two days after, He said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea." Recalling the bitter hate of the ruling Jews, they warned Him against a return into their midst. Then Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was dead. And now, all grew dark to Thomas:—Lazarus was dead; Jesus was going to die; and so, on the verge of despair, he cried, "Let us also go that we may die with him!" When Jesus reached the home of the stricken sisters, Mary sat motionless in her grief; but Martha went forth to meet Him. In reply to her sad, half-reproachful greeting, Jesus assured her that her brother should rise again. Meantime, Mary had gone to the grave. Meeting Jesus on the way, she cast herself at His feet, the half-reproach of her sister turned into half-prayer. And now, in company with many Jews they reached the grave. And as they stood there, tears of sorrow mingling with tears of sympathy, Jesus gave orders that the stone be removed. Then, with a prayer to the Father, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" and at His word, the dead man arose and was restored to his sisters.[k] The news quickly reached Jerusalem; the Jewish Council was hastily convened; and the sentence of death was speedily agreed upon. Jesus, therefore, withdrew from Jerusalem and sought shelter in Ephraim, a small town lying in a wild, uncultivated region between the central towns and the valley

of the Jordan, about sixteen miles north of Jerusalem. Here He found a short season of rest, to be followed so soon by the tragedy of the ages.

The time of the Passover was drawing nigh and Jesus left Ephraim and began His final journey to Jerusalem. To this period is commonly referred the cleansing of The Ten Lepers;[l] His answer to the Pharisees touching the nature of His kingdom and the time of its coming; and the parable of The Pharisee and the Publican,[m] and of The Laborers in the Vineyard.[n] As they moved on toward the Holy City, they were joined by many pilgrims from the North. The ambitious request of Salome for her sons, James and John, is therefore assigned to this journey. And now they reach the ancient city of Jericho. Here two blind men sat by the wayside begging.[o] At Jesus' approach, they cried out, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon us"—a cry which the Church has taken up and embodied in her Morning Service as *The Kyrie*. The people tried to silence them; but Jesus in His tender pity healed them. Here Zacchaeus the Publican,[p] curious to look upon Jesus, climbed into a sycamore tree in order to get a sight of Him as He passed by. Then came the parable of The Pounds, which laid special stress on faithful service and results proportioned to individual gifts.

The Great Feast was now at hand, and large cavalcades of devout Jews made their way to Jerusalem. All interest centered upon Jesus. The people wanted to see Him: the rulers wanted to get Him in their power. As the northern pilgrims pushed up the steep heights from Jericho along the rock-bound path to the Holy City, Jesus turned aside at Bethany to enjoy the Sabbath rest. It was now six days before the Passover.

Here a supper was prepared for Him by Simon the Leper. Lazarus was there and Martha served. And as they sat at meat, Mary approached the couch on which our Lord reclined, having a box of precious ointment. Breaking it, she poured its fragrant contents over His head and feet, wiping His feet with her hair. It was an offering of love for her divine Master. As the odor filled the room, Judas murmured that this ointment had not been sold and its price given to the poor. But Jesus commended her act and pronounced it a memorial for all time. From that moment, Judas sought opportunity to betray his Master; while the rulers planned to put Lazarus to death at the same time, and thus destroy the crowning proof of His divine power. With such wicked plotting, the powers of darkness will surely prevail.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM BETHANY TO GETHSEMANE.

The Triumphal Entry [1]—Cleansing the Temple [2]—Parables of Judgment [3]—Day of Rest [4]—The Lord's Supper [5]—Gethsemane. [6]

THE Sabbath past, Jesus with His disciples again took up the journey to Jerusalem. On the way, they were joined by many pilgrims who had rested outside the city. As they drew near Bethphage,[a] He sent two of the disciples into the village to bring an ass and her colt—one on which man had never sat. On their return, they were accompanied by a vast multitude and as the two crowds met, they set Jesus on the colt and formed a royal procession with Him in their midst. In their enthusiasm, some cast their garments before Him; others scattered branches in the way; while all took up the welcome-shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

words long cherished in the Church as the first Christian hymn and retained in our Communion Service in the form of *The Sanctus*. As they came to the slope of the Mount of Olives, and the Holy City stood out in full view, its awful fate rose up before Him and melted Him to tears. Entering the city, He quietly withdrew from the crowd, visited the Temple, and as evening approached, returned to Bethany.

Early next morning, Jesus returned to the city with His disciples. On the way, He cursed the barren fig-tree, which withered at His word—a parable in act; for Israel's awful fate was prefigured by the utter destruction of the tree that produced nothing but leaves. Entering the city, He went into the Temple and cleansed it, as He had done at the beginning of His ministry. And as those who had made His Father's House a den of thieves were driven forth, the blind and the lame flocked into its sacred courts to seek His healing help. To complete the scene, the little children took up the prophetic strain and the courts of the Temple rang with their Hosanna cry—hailing Him as king. In their impotent rage, His enemies sought to have Him silence those children voices. But He recognized in this the fulfilment of the prophecy that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God had perfected praise. The day's work was done; the evening was at hand; and with the Twelve He returned to Bethany.

The authority which Jesus had exercised, was not to pass unchallenged. So on the following day, His enemies came upon Him with the demand, "By what authority doest thou these things?" He met them with a counter question about John's Baptism. Their refusal to reply showed their cunning and caused them to stand

out self-condemned. He now uttered several parables, setting forth their guilt and doom—The Two Sons,[b] The Wicked Husbandman,[c] The Marriage Feast.[d] Then all the Jewish factions joined hands to work His overthrow. The Pharisees[e] and Herodians[f] met Him with a question about tribute: the Sadducees took up the subject of the Resurrection: a lawyer inquired as to the greatest commandment. He not only answered them all, but silenced them forever. Then He turned upon them with a question about David's son being David's Lord; following it up with scathing rebukes and direful woes. Sitting near the treasure-chests, His gaze settled upon a poor widow casting in two mites—a gift which in the eye of Him who sees what is in the heart as well as in the hand, was worth more than all the offerings of the rich. And now a vision rose before His eyes—the vision of His own suffering. And as the horrors of that scene passed over His soul, a voice such as was heard at His Baptism and Transfiguration, sounded from heaven and spoke the glory of God's name! As He left the Temple, His attention was called to its strength and magnificence; and this led Him to prophesy its complete destruction. Then seated on the Mount of Olives, He told His disciples of the things that should come to pass before His second advent. Enjoining them to watchfulness, He emphasized His teachings by the parable of The Ten Virgins[g] and of The Talents,[h] closing with that wonderful scene of the final judgment when the wicked should go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal. The last denunciations had been uttered; the last word of judgment had been spoken; and He had departed from the Temple forever—The House was left desolate!

The discourses in the Temple ended the public teachings of Jesus; the evening spent on the Mount of Olives[1] finished His instruction of the disciples. His work all done, the following day was one of rest—a Sabbath to His soul, spent in the neighborhood of Bethany. There is no record of how He passed the day—perhaps largely in prayer, or in giving counsel and comfort to His disciples, the little band of Twelve. Meantime His enemies were active. They had met at the home of Caiaphas and planned how they might seize Him. Judas, too, had made his bargain with the chief priests for the thirty pieces of silver—the market-price of a slave! Only two days more—and the Paschal Lamb would be slain!

The next day, Jesus sent Peter and John into the city to make preparation for the Paschal Feast,[2] and at evening He sat down with the Twelve. A strife had arisen among them as to who should occupy the chief place next to the Master. But Jesus taught them by the great object lesson of washing their feet, that true greatness lies in humble service. And now, He startles them with the distressing statement that one of them should betray Him. At first, they looked upon each other in dumb dismay; then with one accord they turned to Him and asked "Lord, is it I?" Peter beckoned to John to ask Him who it was; and in answer, He gave a sign which indicated Judas as the traitor. Judas then went out into the night, while Jesus, reclining with the eleven, spoke of His glorification in His sufferings and the glorification of the Father through Him. Then laying down the commandment of love, He told them how that very night they should all be offended in Him and forsake Him. And now, by His solemn institution, the Passover Feast is superseded by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,[3]

which He set in the Church as a Means of Grace and a memorial of His death. And finally, He comforted them with those precious words which St. John alone records —the bestowal of His peace, His relation to them as the vine to the branches, the promise of the Spirit, and the prayer of intercession.

After singing a hymn, Jesus went forth with His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane.[1] Entering its dark enclosure, He took with Him Peter, James and John. Leaving them near the entrance, He passed within its depths, and there was overwhelmed with an agony so intense that His sweat, mingled with blood, fell in great drops to the ground. Now on His knees, now prostrate on His face, began the agony. Three times He prayed that if possible the cup might pass from Him; yet each time resigned to the Father's will. Three times He returned to the disciples, but found them steeped in sorrow's sleep. Then an angel appeared, strengthening Him. And now, the tramp of men and the light of lanterns announced the approach of the soldiers with Judas as guide. Jesus went forth to meet them; but at His word they fell prostrate to the earth. As they arose, and approached a second time, the treacherous kiss of Judas betrayed Him. Peter rushed to his Master's defence, and with a sword struck off the right ear of a servant of the high priest. But with a touch, Jesus healed the man's ear, and by way of gentle reproof to Peter, made it plain that spiritual victories are not to be won by carnal weapons. Then, as He calmly gave Himself into the hands of the Temple-guard, the disciples all forsook Him and fled. At last, His hour had come and the power of darkness prevailed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRIAL, CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

Before Caiaphas [1]—Before Herod [2]—Before Pilate [3]—The Crucifixion [4]—The Seven Words [5]—The Burial [6]—The Sealed Tomb [7]—The Resurrection [8]—The Various Appearances [9]—The Ascension. [10]

AFTER His arrest, Jesus was first taken to Annas,[a] a deposed High-priest, but still wielding immense power. Annas sent him bound to his son-in-law Caiaphas, the present High-priest. Meantime, Peter and John had followed their Master and gained admittance within the palace gate. It was here that Peter denied Him three times. In the trial, false witnesses were brought forward; but their testimony did not agree. Then they took up what Jesus had said about destroying the Temple in three days; but this was little to the purpose. After that, the High-priest tried to get Jesus to convict Himself; and when He claimed that He was the Son of God, Caiaphas rent his robes, declared Him guilty of blasphemy and pronounced Him worthy of death. The trial was then suspended till morning. During the intervening hours, Jesus was exposed to the cruel taunts of His enemies, who blindfolded Him, smote Him, and even spat upon Him.

In the morning, all the Jewish Council came together and pronounced the formal sentence of death. But the power to execute it no longer lay in their hands, but with Pontius Pilate.[b] This representative of Cæsar commonly lived at Cæsarea; but fearing a tumult he had come to Jerusalem in order to be there during the Feast. The Jews, therefore, hurried Jesus away to Pilate;[c] but

as he cared nothing for a question of religion, and knew that for envy the Jews had delivered Jesus into his hands, he sent Him to Herod.[d] For a long time Herod had desired to see Jesus; but now, disappointed in Him and finding nothing worthy of condemnation, he allowed the coarse sport of the soldiers to have full scope and then sent Him back to Pilate, clad in a cast-off royal robe.

The whole issue now rested with Pilate. The divine bearing of Jesus filled him with secret dread; the dream of his wife added to his fears; so he tried in various ways to secure Christ's release. He offered to chastise Him and then set Him free. He proposed to release Him according to the custom of the Feast.[e] But all to no purpose; the Jews clamored for His blood! Then Pilate took water and washed his hands before them all, declaring himself innocent of this man's blood. But when the Jews took up the awful imprecation, "His blood be upon us and on our children," he yielded to their frenzied demand and gave orders that Jesus should be scourged. The cruel sport of the soldiers now began. They platted a crown of thorns and thrust it upon His head; they cast an old scarlet robe about Him and put a reed in His hand, and then they bowed their knees before Him and smote Him and spat in His face. And now Pilate made one more effort. Presenting Jesus to them, bleeding from the piercing thorns and clad in robes of mock royalty, he said, "Behold your king!" Then they cried out, "We have no king but Cæsar!" So Pilate delivered Jesus unto them to be crucified.[f] And now Judas took the thirty pieces of silver, rushed into the Temple declaring that they were the price of innocent blood, and went and hanged himself.

Jesus was now handed over to the Roman soldiers who led Him forth to be crucified.[g] According to Roman custom, He had to bear His own cross; but weakened by the terrible agonies of the night and the cruel scourging in the morning, He sank beneath its weight. So they laid it upon one Simon of Cyrene, whose sons, Alexander and Rufus, are afterwards mentioned as members of the Church. A large crowd of people followed, many of whom were moved to tears. At last they reached Golgotha; and there they crucified Him between two thieves.[h] Over His head was placed the inscription, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS!" written in Latin and Greek and Hebrew; so that all who passed by might read it. It was now nine o'clock in the morning.[i] As He hung there, dying the slow death of the cross, the priests jeered, the people reviled, the soldiers mocked, and even His partners in crucifixion railed on Him.

The first words that passed Jesus' lips was a prayer for those who had brought Him to this death. The second was the promise of Paradise to the penitent thief. In the third, He committed His mother to the care of John. At twelve o'clock, deep darkness spread over the land and deeper darkness shrouded His soul as He cried, "My God, My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me!" Then came that purely human cry, "I thirst!" which was at once answered by one of the guard. Close upon this came the cry that told His life was ended and His work was done. Then commending Himself into His Father's hands, with a piercing cry He sank in death. At the instant the earth quaked, the vail of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, many that were in their graves came forth, while the centurion with calm

deliberation declared, "Truly, this was THE SON OF GOD!"

Within three short hours the Sabbath would begin; and to prevent its desecration, the bodies had to be taken down at once and buried. Pilate, therefore, gave orders to break the legs of the crucified and thus hasten their death. So the soldiers broke the legs of the thieves; but when they came to Jesus they found Him already dead. One of them, however, thrust a spear into His side and there came forth blood and water! Then Joseph of Arimathea,[j] a member of the Jewish Council, and a secret disciple of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. With the help of Nicodemus, he hastily embalmed it and gave it burial in a new tomb in his own garden. A great stone was placed at the entrance—and the Prince of Life lay in the power of death!

To make sure that the disciples should not steal away the body of Jesus by night, and then claim that He had risen from the dead, the Jews appealed to Pilate and orders were given that the tomb should be sealed and a watch set to guard it.[k] But on the morning of the third day, there was a sudden shock of earthquake, an angel came down and rolled away the stone and Jesus came forth triumphant. No one saw Him leave the tomb; for the countenance of the angel was like lightning and his raiment white as snow; and at his presence the Roman guard became as dead men.[l] From time to time, however, Jesus showed Himself to many witnesses. The first to learn of His resurrection were those devoted women who were the last at the cross and the first at the grave. They carried the news to the disciples. Peter and John hastened and found it even as the women had told them. Mary Magdalene returned a second time to

the tomb and was rewarded by seeing her Lord—the first to greet Him after His resurrection. Then, in some manner not revealed, He appeared to Peter; after that, to two disciples—Cleopas and probably Luke—to whom He discovered Himself in the breaking of bread. On the evening of the same day, He appeared to all the disciples except Thomas, and showed them His hands and His side to prove that it was indeed He; and solemnly breathing upon them, He pronounced His word of Peace. Thus ended the first Lord's Day. On the second Lord's Day, Thomas was with them, and by a strong appeal Jesus cleared away his doubts; so that in the ecstacy of the moment he cried, "My Lord and my God!" Then He appeared unto seven of them as they were again fishing in the Sea of Galilee, where He publicly reinstated Peter. At another time He was seen of five hundred brethren at once, and still again of James.

For forty days Jesus remained on earth, revealing Himself to His disciples[m] and preparing them for their work. But at last, the time had come for His return to the Father. So He gave them their mighty commission to make disciples of all men by "baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." And then, having led them out as far as Bethany, He gave them the assurance of His all-power and ever-presence, and lifted up His hands and blessed them. And as He blessed them, He rose from their midst and a cloud received Him out of their sight.[n] Thus was completed that circle of manifestations, so briefly and fully summed up in His own words, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father."

CHAPTER X.

WOMEN WHO REVERENTLY MINISTERED TO JESUS.

The Jewish Custom 1—The Virgin Mary 2—Mary Magdalene 3—Mary the Mother of James and Joses 4—Salome 5—Mary and Martha 6—Joanna and Susanna.7

IT was a common custom among the Jews, for women to contribute to the support of teachers whom they specially held in reverence. This accounts for the fact that so many of them were found among the disciples of Jesus and "ministered unto Him of their substance." The most of them followed Him, not merely in keeping with long established usage, but as a mark of gratitude for deliverance from evil spirits and infirmities.

It is but natural that we should place first in this list the name of THE VIRGIN MARY. The leading points of her life are brought out in the life of her Son. After His entrance upon His public ministry, we get little glimpses of her, here and there, until finally she stood at the cross. Her sorrow at His death and her joy at His resurrection, are alike veiled from our view. Many appearances were accorded the disciples of their Master after the resurrection; but Mary is not mentioned as sharing in them. Neither is she named as being among those who witnessed His ascension; or of those who were present at the blessed outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The only record is that she continued steadfast in prayer and supplication in the upper room at Jerusalem, and that her companions were the Apostles, a few devout women, and the brethren of our Lord. It is probable that the rest of her life was spent at Jerusalem in the home of St. John. Beyond this we dare not conjecture. Enough that we leave her in the attitude of prayer, not

as the Mother of God, controlling the eternal Son; but as a child of God, like any other child of earth, seeking grace through His Name.

While making His second circuit of Galilee, Jesus cast seven devils out of MARY MAGDALENE, or Mary of Magdala.[a] In addition to her devout attendance upon Jesus in His ministry throughout Galilee, Mary joined the company of disciples on that last journey to Jerusalem. She remained at the Cross to the very last and tarried near the tomb watching in the growing darkness the place where her Master lay. After the enforced rest of the Sabbath, she hastened with the other Mary and Salome to the sepulchre. Finding the tomb empty, she returned to the city to tell His disciples, and following Peter and John, remained sorrowing at the grave. Then the angel appeared and told her the news of the resurrection. As she turned about in sore dismay, she was greeted by her Master, whose simple call, "Mary," revealed Him as her risen Lord; and with a cry of recognition she cast herself at His feet and pronounced that word which marks the deepest reverence of the Jewish woman toward her chosen teacher, "Rabonni!" As she was about to cling to His feet, Jesus startled her with the demand, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." Arising, she hastens to bear the news of the resurrection to the disciples—a fitting close to her life of devotion.

Some regard MARY, the mother of James and Joses, as the sister of the Virgin Mother; others as her sister-in-law. Whatever the tie of blood, she was the wife of Clopas; and she and the mother of our Lord, after the death of their husbands, lived many years under the same roof. This Mary had two other sons, Jude and

Simon. James and Jude were disciples of our Lord; and some writers see in Simon none other than Simon Zelotes. She does not figure in the history of our Lord till the day of crucifixion. With Mary Magdalene, she followed the body of Jesus to the grave, sitting over against the sepulchre while the gloom of night gathered about them and the deeper gloom of desolation settled in upon their souls. At the dawn of the first Lord's Day, she too hastened to the tomb. There she saw the vision of angels and listened to the angel-message. This is the last glimpse we get of her—a beautiful scene as she stands there, startled at the sight of the angels and listening with rapture to their greeting.

SALOME was the wife of Zebedee.[b] Her sons were James and John—two of the favored disciples. By some, she is regarded as the sister of the Virgin Mother. Salome was in the band of Galileans who travelled in company with Jesus to the last Passover. It was on the way to Jerusalem that she stepped forth from among those who were following Christ to His suffering and death, and made the ambitious request, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." But there was more than ambition in her heart: there was unbounded faith and love sublime! It was this that brought her to the cross with that little group of women who watched Him to the last. It was this too that quickened her steps to the sepulchre early on Easter morning, bearing the sweet spices to anoint the body of Jesus. This act of loving devotion was the crowning work of her life.

While Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, did

not follow Jesus from place to place, still they often ministered to His wants in their home at Bethany. These sisters were of widely differing temperaments, though equally devoted to their Master. MARY was of a meditative mood, sitting at the feet of Jesus, eager to catch every word that fell from His sacred lips. When her brother died, she sat in the chamber of mourning, with all its melancholy tokens, and came forth only at the call of the Master. After her brother was brought back from the grave, the deep reverence which always marked her relation to her Lord, was intensified; until at last it found its fullness of expression when she brought forth the alabaster box of precious ointment and poured its contents over the head and feet of Jesus. Fitting close to her beautiful life—anointing aforehand her Lord's body for the burying! MARTHA was an intensely devout woman. Her difference of temperament is particularly shown in that she was careful and troubled about many things; and in place of that calmness of spirit which is the crowning grace of her sister, she grew fretful and complaining because she was left to serve alone. And yet, she shares with her brother and sister the distinction of being one of those whom Jesus loved. After the death of her brother, unlike her sister, she went forth to meet Jesus; and while the spirit of complaint was manifest, she still gave utterance to words that expressed her faith in His wisdom and power. The last little glimpse we get of her as she served at Simon's house, shows her still active, but patient and uncomplaining; for while some had indignation at Mary using the precious nard for Jesus' anointing, not a word of disapproval passed from Martha's lips.

The name of JOANNA occurs twice in the Gospels. In

the first passage she is spoken of as the wife of Chuza, steward of Herod Antipas; and therefore, a woman of station. Some are of the opinion that it was her husband who went from Capernaum to Cana and besought Jesus to come and heal his son; and that in grateful recognition of Jesus' healing help, she followed Him and ministered to His wants. Whatever truth may underlie this, it matters not; one thing is certain: Joanna was a faithful follower of Jesus, faithful even to the Cross and the grave. As one of those who ministered unto Him during His lifetime, she too was among those that were honored with the angel-message that He had indeed risen from the grave. The name of SUSANNA appears but once—in connection with Mary Magdalene and Joanna; while others of that faithful band of women have no place on history's page. But what of that? Their names, like hers, are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE AND LABORS OF PETER.

Awaiting the Promise [1]—Choosing Judas' Successor [2]—The Day of Pentecost [3]—Curing the Lame Man [4]—All Things Common [5]—A Mission Tour [6]—Peter in Prison [7]—Peter's Plea for the Gentiles [8]—Peter Rebuked. [9]

OF the chosen Twelve, no life is so full of interest as that of Simon Peter. He is their central figure, their leading character. His name always heads the list, just as that of Judas always comes at the close. As a man, we know him only as the son of Jona, toiling as a fisherman and possessed of some little means. His life is so interwoven with that of his Master, that we shall not touch upon his disciple days; but begin with the time when the Apostles tarried at Jerusalem, awaiting the promise of the Father.

When we open the Book of The Acts, we find Peter's name still leading the list. Following their Master's instructions, the disciples kept together in Jerusalem, continuing with one accord in prayer. While thus assembled, Peter stood up in their midst, and proposed that they fill the vacancy created by the apostacy of Judas. He showed them that the same prophetic Word which foretold the fall of Judas, also provided for a successor; and then pointed out the qualifications of the man who should take his place. Acting upon his suggestion, they set two of the company before them, and then called upon the Lord in prayer to designate by lot which one He had chosen to take part in the Apostleship which Judas had forfeited by his sin. The lot was cast, and Matthias was added to The Twelve.

At last, the Day of Pentecost[a] came with the promised outpouring of the Holy Ghost. To the natural eye, it was but the madness of intoxication. Then Peter stood forth before the gathering multitude, denied the base charge, and explained the real nature and cause of the marvellous manifestation. Sketching in rapid succession the leading stages of Christ's life, with a background of Scripture that brought it out in striking colors, he charged upon them that they had wickedly crucified Him whom God had raised up and made both Lord and Christ. And when, under the spell of his convincing speech, they cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter replied, "Believe and be baptized!" As a result, three thousand were added to the Church that day! But the greatest effect was upon Peter himself—no longer the rash, impetuous disciple; henceforth the safe, reliant Apostle: no longer Simon, the Hearer; but Peter, the Rock!

Accompanied by John, Peter went up to the Temple at the hour of prayer, and there cured a poor lame beggar. A wondering crowd gathered around and Peter again seized the opportunity to preach Christ and Him crucified. In his first discourse, he had spoken particularly of Christ's person; here he deals with His office. At the instigation of the Sadducees, the two Apostles were cast into prison; but when brought before the rulers, Peter turned accuser and charged upon them the crucifixion of Christ. Then they were dismissed with the demand that they should neither speak nor teach in the name of Jesus. Returning to the brethren, they all joined in thanksgiving to God and prayed for grace and strength to speak the Word.

In the first flush of enthusiasm, the followers of the new faith sold their possessions and laid the price at the Apostles' feet. This was not the law of the Church, but a liberty accorded its members. Under the stress of striking examples, all would not act with the same purity of purpose. Among these, was the notable case of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. Their sin was a grievous one—an effort to deceive the Holy Ghost; and with it came the swift doom of death. It reminds us of the summary judgments of God against those who wrought folly in Israel. A new persecution now arose, headed by the Sadducees, and the Apostles were cast into prison. During the night, they were delivered by the mighty hand of God and sent to the Temple to preach the Word of Life. Again they were seized and brought before the Jewish Council. But Peter charged upon them the crucifixion of Christ and set the sting to their consciences. Though cut to the heart, they were restrained by the prudent counsel of Gamaliel from other violence

than stripes. The Gospel was now carried into Samaria. In this district was a sorceror called Simon. Attracted by the wonderful gifts of Peter and John, who had gone thither at the call of Philip, this man offered money if they would confer on him a like power. Peter rejected his offer and sternly rebuked him, urging him to repent and seek the forgiveness of God.

A brief period of rest coming to the Church, Peter started out on a missionary tour. We find him first at Lydda, where his cure of the palsied Eneas led to the conversion of all that dwelt in the plain of Sharon. Then he went to Joppa, in response to an urgent appeal from the disciples there, who were filled with grief over the death of Dorcas. Here he stopped at the house of one Simon a tanner—a proof that he was fast shaking off the restraints of legalism; for as this trade had to do with dead animals, it was reckoned unclean among the Jews. While here, he had that vision which prepared him to step clear across the dividing line between Jew and Gentile. So he went to Cæsarea,[b] entered the house of Cornelius, and there preached of Him whom God had ordained to be the Judge of the quick and the dead.

On his return to Jerusalem, Peter was taken to task for having eaten with the uncircumcised. But when he explained the nature of his visit to Cæsarea, with its blessed outcome, they held their peace and glorified God that He had graciously accepted the Gentiles. And now, Herod, wily as he was wicked, killed James the brother of John, and cast Peter into prison. Sixteen soldiers were set to guard him ; while he was bound to a soldier on either side. Over against this show of imperial power, was pitted the prayers of the Church. The last night came, and Peter was still a prisoner.

But prayer was made without ceasing unto God; and in answer, an angel came down, broke off his chains, threw wide open the prison doors, led him forth in safety, and thus cheated the monster of his prey.

When certain Judaizing Christians tried to force the ceremonial law on the Gentile converts of Antioch,[c] Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the brethren. The Apostles and Elders came together, and a unanimous decision was reached—the Gentiles being forever freed from the yoke of the Mosaic Law. At this meeting, Peter took a leading part. The first to speak, he drew an argument from his own experiences, and closed with an appeal not to burden the Gentiles with demands which they themselves could not meet. One more glimpse of Peter, and he passes off the stage of Apostolic action. And what is remarkable, it is a display of his old-time weakness—a lack of firmness. He had gone to Antioch and there mingled freely with the Gentile Christians, following their customs and adapting himself to their mode of life. Soon after, some Judaizing Christians also came to Antioch and took offence at Peter's freedom. To please them, Peter withdrew from his Gentile brethren; and this proved a great stumbling-block. Paul saw the danger and openly rebuked Peter; so peace and fellowship were again restored. This is practically the last record regarding St. Peter. A few references in his Epistles throw a little light upon his work; but they are at best incidental and unimportant. There are many beautiful legends about his later life; but they lack all historic foundation. As to his end, tradition tells us that he was crucified at Rome.

CHAPTER XII.

JAMES AND JOHN.

The Rank of James[1]—The First Apostolic Martyr[2]—The Home of John[3]—The House of Prayer[4]—A Pillar in the Church[5]—Leaves Jerusalem[6]—At Ephesus[7]—At Patmos[8]—His Writings.[9]

NEXT in importance to Peter, stand the names of James and John. They were brothers—the sons of Zebedee. Their mother's name was Salome—she who made the request that they might sit, the one on the right hand of our Lord, the other on the left, in His Kingdom. Of the two, James is supposed to be the elder; though John was the more prominent in Apostolic work. He was one of the favored three, whose names were so often linked together in some special mission or some marked honor. Quick-tempered, he shared with his brother in the name "Boanerges"—Sons of Thunder; and that he merited the title is shown by the fact that he would have called down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who refused to receive Jesus into their village.

After the Agony in the Garden, James drops out of sight, until the disciples are gathered together for prayer and supplication, awaiting the Day of Pentecost. Then came that day when he drank the cup that Jesus drank and was baptized with the baptism with which He was baptized. Herod Agrippa[a] was at that time ruler of the Jews and a bitter enemy of the Church. As a cunning stroke of policy—and cruel too—he seized Peter and James, and cast them into prison. To silence this Son of Thunder and get that Rock out of the way, would

indeed be a master-stroke. James was the first to be taken—a fact which justifies the inference that he was a leading spirit in the early Church. A single sentence tells the story of Herod's crime: "He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword!" And so, James was the second martyr of the Christian Church—the first of the Apostles to suffer death!

When James was put to death, the great work of John's life was scarcely begun. The Acts of the Apostles tell very little of him, and that little is shared with Peter and, in some instances, the rest of the Apostles. After the Ascension, he made his home in Jerusalem—a home hallowed by the presence of the Virgin Mother. With the other disciples, he resorted to that "upper chamber" and there waited for the promise of the Father—the baptism of the Holy Ghost. At last, the Day of Pentecost came, and John shared with the other Apostles in the blessed outpouring and thus became one of the first preachers of the Christian Faith.

The disciples still observed the stated hours of prayer and went to the Temple, according to custom, to attend its service. It was on one of these occasions that John in company with Peter, on entering the gate called Beautiful, wrought that marvellous cure upon the man who had been lame from his birth. To the wondering multitude, they pointed out Jesus as the source of healing, and then charged upon them the crucifixion of Christ. For this, they were cast into prison; but on the following day, they were brought before the Sanhedrim[b] and dismissed with the demand to teach no more in the name of Jesus. Violence soon followed threats. Stephen was stoned and the disciples were scattered. Philip the Deacon went into Samaria and there met with marvellous

success in mission work. To confirm the new converts, Peter and John were sent into Samaria and there made a tour of its cities and villages. He who as the Son of Thunder would have called down fire to consume them, now prays for the heavenly Flame, even the Holy Ghost, to descend upon them and give them life!

Eighteen years have passed by since his Master's Ascension and John is still at Jerusalem. Meantime, the Church has grown—no longer a Jewish sect but a universal religion—the Church Catholic—Jews and Gentiles alike, marshalling under the banner of Christ. But the Jewish Christians not only adhered to Judaism; they insisted that the Gentile Christians should enter the Church through Judaistic doors. It was this that called out the great Council at Jerusalem. Among "the Pillars of the Church," at this convention, was St. John; and while he does not hold as prominent a place as Peter or even James, the brother of our Lord, he still takes part in that great Apostolic gathering. This is the last Scripture record we have concerning him.

How long John remained at Jerusalem is only a matter of conjecture. At the outbreak of the Jewish war, the whole company of disciples left the city and found a safe retreat beyond Jordan in a town called Pella. If John was at Jerusalem when the war broke out, he no doubt was among the refugees that escaped the siege. In any event, it is regarded as a settled fact that he spent the later years of his life at Ephesus. His Letters to the Seven Churches show that he was perfectly familiar with their strength and weakness, and exercised some kind of oversight among them. Just when he took up his residence there, cannot be definitely determined. It was probably after the death of St. Paul; for in his Let-

ter to the Ephesians, in which there are several salutations, Paul makes no mention of John's name. Besides, if John did not leave Jerusalem till the commencement of the Jewish war, it seems likely that he did not take up his residence at Ephesus until the Holy City was razed to the ground.

Ephesus was an important center. It had been blessed with the labors of St. Paul, whose Church established there threatened the overthrow of the worship of Diana. The Church at Jerusalem, the chief center of Jewish Christianity, had been utterly destroyed; the Church at Antioch, the chief center of Gentile Christianity, had dropped into second place; while that of Ephesus now ranked first in importance. Here Timothy labored until summoned to Rome; and now John stands at the head of the work. With this as a center of operations, he exercised an Apostolic oversight of all the Churches in Asia Minor. From his Letters, we infer that he sent forth evangelists to the various cities, and that he made missionary visits among them to offset evil influences and encourage and strengthen that which was good. His, however, was not an Episcopal oversight; but an authority accorded him as one of the original Twelve.

At last John was banished to Patmos. His presence in that island of the sea is vouched for, not only by his own words, but also by the record of the Church. The exact date of his banishment is a matter of dispute. Some refer it to the reign of Nero; others to that of Domitian. Patmos is a small island in the Ægean Sea. It has but one town. This is divided into two parts—the lower constituting the harbor, the upper situated on the hills above. Half way up, is the cave where John is said to have received the visions recorded in The Reve-

lation. Over the cave stands a chapel, a memorial to the beloved disciple; and on its walls are many rude figures representing the scenes of the Apocalypse.

There are many beautiful legends connected with the later life of St. John, some of which, at least, have reasonable foundation in fact. He was the last of the Apostles, living to an extreme old age. Unlike the other Apostles, he died a natural death. His influence upon his immediate disciples was so strong that he was the moulding power in the Church for at least three centuries; while his Gospel and Epistles have given strength and comfort, joy and peace to all succeeding generations, and shall continue to do so till time is merged into eternity.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REMAINING APOSTLES.

Andrew [1]—Philip [2]—Nathanael [3]—Matthew [4]—Thomas [5]—James the Son of Alphaeus [6]—Judas Labbaeus [7]—Simon the Canaanite [8]—Judas Iscariot. [9]

THERE is but little that is distinctive about the lives of the remaining Apostles. The Twelve are often mentioned; their individual names are here and there given; but the special part of each is so limited, that a few lines tell the story of his life. And yet, limited though it be, there is enough in almost every case to show the real character of the man.

ANDREW was a disciple of John the Baptist—one of those to whom Jesus was pointed out as the Lamb of God, and who attached himself at once to our Lord. Having spent the day with Jesus, he sought out his

brother Simon and said, "We have found the Messias!" He was one of the four who inquired of our Lord about His coming; while the Greeks who desired to see Jesus, presented their appeal through Andrew and Philip. This fact, coupled with his Greek name, gave color to the theory that he was a Hellenist. When Jesus fed the multitude, it was Andrew that pointed out the lad with the five barley-loaves and the two fishes. His work as an Apostle is shrouded in mystery. One ancient writer affirms that he preached in Scythia; another, in Asia Minor and Thrace; and a third, that he was crucified in Greece on a X-shaped cross.

PHILIP was of Bethsaida,[a] the city of Andrew and Peter. His name heads the second group of Apostles. He, too, was one of those Galileans who were drawn to the banks of the Jordan to listen to the preaching of John. To him belongs the distinction of being the first person to whom Jesus said, "Follow Me!" Filled with the Messianic hope, he saw in Jesus the promised Deliverer, and with zeal all aglow he went forth and found Nathanael; while his positive declaration was, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." His weakness of faith is shown when he said, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" while the childlike simplicity of his nature shines out when he makes the earnest appeal, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Philip witnessed the Ascension and was with the disciples on the Day of Pentecost; but after that, all is tradition. And even in these traditions, in the main wild and fantastic, his name is confounded with that of Philip the Evangelist.

NATHANAEL started out with a strong prejudice, "Can

there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Living[b] but a few miles from that city, he knew it well—knew, too, that it had no place in prophecy. But yielding to Philip's earnest invitation, he was brought to Christ and led to confess, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel!" Once more the name of Nathanael occurs—when Jesus showed Himself to several of the disciples on the Sea of Galilee, shortly after the resurrection. It is commonly supposed that he is the same as Bartholomew—Nathanael being his personal name, while Bartholomew is his surname. Tradition has it that he labored in Armenia, was there flayed alive, and then crucified with his head downward.

MATTHEW, also known as LEVI, was a publican. While he was sitting at the receipt of custom, Jesus called him; and straightway he left all and followed Him. The specific event that brings Matthew prominently before us is the feast held at his house, at which Jesus was guest. Here the Pharisees murmured against Jesus for eating with publicans and sinners. Here, too, He turned from the miracle of words to the greater miracle of deeds. We know but little of St. Matthew as an Apostle. But we have his Gospel, which stands as the first Book in the New Testament, and which gives in such fullness the Sermon on the Mount, together with a rich cluster of parables. As to his later life, the accounts are so conflicting that none of them can be trusted; there being no agreement even as to the manner of his death.

THOMAS—also called Didymus—figures only in the Gospel of St. John. Little is said of him; but enough to bring out his character more distinctly than that of the other Apostles with whom he is classed. Thomas

was slow to believe and quick to give up in despair; but he had an ardent love for Jesus and was ready to follow Him even to the grave. This is shown by three distinct events. The first was when Jesus proposed to go into Judea to Bethany—just after the announcement of Lazarus' death. Thomas said, "Let us also go that we may die with Him!" The second was during the last Supper, when our Saviour spoke of His departure. Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest and how can we know the way?" The third was after the resurrection. Thomas would not believe that his Master had really risen. But eight days after, when Jesus again appeared to the disciples and Thomas was with them, with the fullness of evidence before him he cried, "My Lord and my God!" As to his later life tradition is in conflict, the only point of agreement being that he suffered the martyr's death.

JAMES—he who is known as James the Less or James the son of Alphaeus—does not figure in the history of Christ till he is called to the Apostolate. Again we hear nothing of him till after the resurrection, when we find him, with the other Apostles and those devout women, waiting for the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We know nothing further of him except that, according to tradition, he labored in Egypt where he suffered martyrdom by crucifixion.

JUDAS was the brother of James. He is also known as "Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddaeus." His name occurs but once in the Gospel. Jesus is comforting His disciples with the prospect of seeing Him again. And when He gave them the assurance that He would manifest Himself to them, Judas said, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the

world?" By this question he showed that he entertained the same low idea of a temporal kingdom in which our Lord should rule—a view in which the other Apostles seemed to share. His later life is wrapped in obscurity, there being no agreement of where he labored or when he died. All, however, agree that he suffered death by martyrdom.

SIMON THE CANAANITE has no place in Scripture except in the list of Apostles. His name is misleading; for he was not a Canaanite, but a Galilean of pure Jewish blood. It would be more correct to call him Simon the Cananaean—a term which means the same as Zelotes, which is also applied to him, and which points to his probable connection with a band of Zealots who were fanatical supporters of the ancient religious ritual, regardless of the methods employed to insure its defence. According to tradition, he was crucified in Judea in the reign of Domitian.

JUDAS ISCARIOT, the betrayer of Jesus, was the son of a certain Simon. He was the only disciple from Judea, all the rest being Galileans. He was the treasurer of the disciple band, dispensing gifts of charity and making needful purchases. It was he who found fault with Mary for using the precious nard to anoint Jesus, instead of selling it and giving its purchase price to the poor. The scene at the last Supper, the traitor's kiss in the Garden, standing as they do in such striking contrast, show the deep depravity of his heart. The betrayal of innocent blood for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave, proves his resistless passion for money. His end was one of utter despair. A ragged, weather-beaten, forlorn tree, near Jerusalem, is pointed out to the traveler as the one on which he hanged himself.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SEVEN DEACONS.

The Seven [1]—Stephen's Preaching [2]—His Arrest and Defence [3]—His Charge Against the Sanhedrim [4]—His Martyrdom [5]—Philip [6]—His Work in Samaria [7]—The Conversion of the Queen's Chamberlain [8]—Philip's Home at Cæsarea [9]—The Remaining Deacons.[0]

IT soon became evident that the Apostles must confine themselves to the ministry of the Word; while the secular part of church service had to be placed in other hands. There must not only be order in the Church; but, with proper limitations, ORDERS! As the number of the disciples multiplied, the daily ministrations to the temporal wants of the needy became more difficult. This resulted in a lack of service which begat murmurings—the Hellenists complaining that the Hebrews were negligent of the needs of their widows. Then the Twelve called all the disciples together and said, "It is not meet that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables." As a solution of the trouble, they suggested that seven men be chosen—men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom they should appoint over this business. So the Church made choice of The Seven, whom they set before the Apostles; and these solemnly installed them into their office by prayer and the laying on of hands.

The name of STEPHEN heads the list of The Seven. As a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, he could not be limited to the narrow sphere of serving tables; not even to the narrow views of Christianity as still cherished by the Apostles. He saw in the Gospel something grander than the Temple—something that, in

time, would outgrow Judaism. He first attracted attention by the miracles he performed among the people. Then he entered upon a series of disputations with Hellenistic Jews, in which he prophesied against the Temple-rites and boldly preached Jesus as the Messiah. He pressed the truth home with such force that they could not resist the wisdom with which he spake. Unable to meet his attacks by counter arguments, they proposed to suppress him by force.

At the instigation of the Hellenists, therefore, Stephen was arrested, brought before the Jewish Council, and charged with speaking blasphemous words against the Temple and the Law. At once, his countenance kindled with angelic brightness, so that his judges were startled at the sight. But when the High-priest called for his defence and Stephen outlined the perverse spirit in which the chosen people had met the glorious dispensations of God—when it became evident that the drift of the argument was centred upon them, they stiffened their necks against his reasoning, shut their ears to his appeals, and settled in their hearts his speedy doom. When Stephen saw the stubborn resistance, he stopped short in his speech and burst upon them as a flame of fire, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye!"

At this juncture came his direct charge that they had been the betrayers and murderers of the Just One. This cut them to the heart: they gnashed on him with their teeth; as yet, refraining from violence. But when he turned his face toward the open sky, and gazing into its depths declared that he saw the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God—with one accord, they burst forth into a loud cry, as if to drown his voice; they clapped

their hands upon their ears, as if to shut out his blasphemies; and then, rushing upon him with one impulse, they dragged him out of the city to execute, in Jewish fashion, the speedy sentence of death.

According to custom, the violator of the Law was taken outside the city gates and there crushed to death by stones hurled from the hands of his accusers. Those, therefore, who were instrumental in bringing about the sentence of death, stripped themselves for their terrible task and laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul—a fact which marks him as a leader in Christian persecution. And now, all is ready. The first volley of stones that crashed upon Stephen's poor body, brought from his lips almost the very words that Jesus uttered on the Cross, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The second brought him to his knees with a loud cry; and again the spirit of his Master prevailed as he prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then he sank to the ground, his body mangled with the murderous assault—the inspired penman toning down the bloody scene with one sublime stroke, "He fell asleep!" His was not only the martyr's crown; but as Stephen—The Crown—he was the crowning martyr.

The name of Philip stands next in the list. After Stephen, he is the most prominent of The Seven. Like Stephen, too, he did not confine himself to the daily distribution of alms; but turned to the preaching of the Word. His work in Judea was, no doubt, along the lines indicated by his appointment; but when the persecution headed by Saul of Tarsus, scattered the disciples throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria—except the Apostles—Philip, in common with the others, was

compelled to take flight; and going down to the city of Samaria,[a] he preached Christ unto the people.

His ministry in Samaria had all the marks that followed true Apostolic effort, with a single exception—the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There was the curing of the lame and the palsied, the casting out of unclean spirits, and the joy of the people at the preaching of the Word. To Philip, therefore, belonged the marked distinction of breaking through the barriers that thus far had kept Christianity within the bounds of strict Judaism. He was thus the real forerunner of Paul for the ingathering of the Gentiles.

There are two incidents in his life that bring Philip prominently to the front. The first is the episode with Simon the Sorcerer, which resulted in Simon's acknowledgment of the greater power of God and his entreaty that Peter should pray for God's mercy upon him. The next was his commission from the angel of the Lord, to take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, a desert-place—the direct route into Egypt, and there join himself to a chariot, whose occupant was a chamberlain at the court of Candice, queen of the Ethiopians. This man—himself an Ethiopian—had been up to the Holy City; and now, returning from his pilgrimage, he was devoutly reading the prophecy of Isaiah. By an impulse of the Spirit, Philip ran at full speed and overtook him; and being taken up into the chariot, he opened unto him the Scriptures and made it so plain that the prophecies pertained to Jesus, as the Messiah, that the man was constrained to ask for baptism in His Holy Name.

The last glimpse we get of Philip is in his own house at Cæsarea, where Paul tarried several days on his return from his third missionary journey and enjoyed a short

respite before he made his last visit to Jerusalem. The worth of his work had won for him a new title—The Evangelist! Not only did he himself preach the Word, his house giving shelter to the great Apostle to the Gentiles with his companions in travel; but he had four daughters who were endowed with the spirit of prophecy and who gave themselves to the ministry of teaching. There are many traditions touching his life; but they are untrustworthy—the more so since his name is so often confounded with that of Philip the Apostle.

Of the remaining deacons, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch, we know absolutely nothing—the only one to whom there is a possible reference in Scripture being the last one. A sect called the Nicolaitans is mentioned in the Revelation of St. John; but whether they are named after him is a disputed point.

CHAPTER XV.

EARLY LIFE OF PAUL.

Paul's Birthplace[1]—His Parents[2]—His Occcupation[3]—His Education[4]—His Religious Life.[5]

ON the banks of the river Cydnus, a few miles up the Mediterranean, there lies a wretched town called Tarsous.[a] It is all that remains of the once magnificent city where Paul was born. Tarsus stood on both banks of the river, with the snow-capped peaks of Taurus[b] in full view. The rugged mountain scenery begins but a short distance above the city, where the river leaps from its mountain fastness in a great cataract, thence flowing rich and strong to the sea. Tarsus was a flourishing city in Paul's day. It was the capital

of the province of Cilicia, on the southeast coast of Asia Minor, with fertile plains rolling back from the river whose banks were lined with merchant ships from every port of trade. This province was noted for its immense tracts of timber-lands; while on the mountain sides there grazed countless herds of goats, whose long fine hair was manufactured into a variety of articles, in particular tents, and these found ready sale all along the coast of the Mediterranean. As this city was the head of navigation, and beyond was the famous pass leading into the interior, it became a great centre of supplies for the inner districts, and in turn received their products to be borne out upon the great sea and distributed along its shores. The city itself was free, having an independent government; but the surrounding province was under Roman sway. Tarsus was not only a centre of trade; it was also a seat of learning. As such it had but two rivals in all the world, Athens and Alexandria; and in many respects it eclipsed both of these. Such was the birth-place of St. Paul. In his own words, he was "a citizen of no mean city."

Paul's parents were both Jews, sprung from the stock of Benjamin. His father was a Hellenist—*i. e.*, a Jew living in a Greek city and using the Greek language But he was by no means a Greek in life; for he adhered most strictly to Jewish customs and stood straitly by his Jewish faith. Nothing is known of Paul's mother. However, it may safely be inferred that he received from her a positive religious impress and that his early training was largely in her hands. This would be the more careful because of his heathen surroundings; for Tarsus had an imposing Baal-worship of the most degrading kind, and nothing but a strict religious home-life would shield

him from its corrupting influence. Paul's father was a Roman citizen—an honor accorded to very few of the Jews. The rights of citizenship sometimes came from the Emperor as a favor, sometimes as a matter of merit. It was probably as a reward of service to the State that Paul's father became a citizen of Rome—all whose vast privileges were inherited by the son. The Apostle is known by two names, Saul and Paul. At his circumcision he received the name of Saul, a favorite name with the tribe of Benjamin—the name of Israel's first king! But as a Roman citizen, he also had a Roman name; and so, outside the circle of Jewish friends, he would be known as Paul. As long as he lived among the Jews and for the Jews, he is known by his Jewish name, but when he turned to the Gentiles he took up his Roman name.

The time came for the boy to choose a calling for life. His father was a merchant; and Paul, as a free citizen of Rome, would have enjoyed decided advantages in taking up his father's business. But his lot of life fell in other lines, and it was decided that he should go to college and become a Rabbi—teacher, lawyer, preacher, all in one! There was, however, a step preliminary to this. Every Jewish boy had to learn a trade. This was designed to make him familiar with toil and struggle, and serve as an honorable resource in times of need. The occupation to which Paul turned was that of tent-maker, one of the chief trades in Tarsus. It served a useful purpose more than once in after life. Paul is commonly described as being of short stature, with a high forehead, shaggy eyebrows, an aquiline nose, and a most winning expression of countenance. He had an ardent nature, quick and sensitive—marked by intensity

of zeal and a perseverance that never flagged. His aims were lofty, his convictions strong; while all combined were backed up by a sterling character, an uncompromising spirit, and a powerful intellect, tempered with a peculiar gentleness of nature. These qualities were not dislodged by the operation of grace: they were tempered by it.

From the fact that Paul quotes the Greek poets, it has been inferred that he received his education in part at the celebrated university of Tarsus. On the other hand, the quotations which he employs are commonplace ones, such as anyone speaking the Greek language might be able to use: besides, it is highly improbable that a son designed for the Law would be permitted to study in the Greek schools. However this may be, it is certain that Paul's early education was more Jewish than Greek. And yet, this city of scholars must have had some influence upon so keen and receptive a mind as that of Paul. The imagery that fills his letters, is peculiar to heathen life. The soldier in full armor, the athlete on the race-course, the boxer in the arena, the triumphal processions of victorious generals—such were the scenes common to his boyhood days; and these left their lasting impress on his mind. From all parts of the world, wealthy Jews sent their sons to Jerusalem to receive the finishing touches of their education. To these great schools of the Rabbis, Paul was now sent. His teacher was Gamaliel, the most celebrated Jewish Rabbi of his time. This man belonged to a line of great teachers, his grandfather being the celebrated Hillel—one of the founders of the sect of the Pharisees. He was a man of liberal views and of remarkably tolerant spirit. It was at the feet of this great man that Paul sat and studied himself—his

most distinguished pupil. Paul's keen intellect, his thirst for knowledge, his eager application, would find their fullest scope under the powerful spell of so masterly a man—an inference which is justified by the deep learning, the apt quotations, the strong reasoning, that are manifest on every page of his writings.

Paul's father was a Pharisee: so, too, was his great teacher, Gamaliel. But while the master was a man of liberal spirit and tolerant toward the opinion of others; the pupil was most exacting and uncompromising, and followed to their utmost limits the lines which conscience marked out for him. As a result, the whole energy of his life seemed centered upon one thing—the development of a work-righteousness; and to this end he was most scrupulous in meeting every legal demand and living up to the full letter of the law. But, like Luther, the more he tried to work out his own salvation, the less satisfied he must have been with his own religious estate. As a slave to the law, he could never satisfy the demands of his conscience. He must have realized that mere outward legal observance was but a shell lacking in real living substance. This would cause him to seek new avenues through which to do God service and satisfy the earnest cravings of his soul. And so, following out with fiery impulse the honest bent of his nature, he was the better prepared for the startling change that turned him from a persecutor of the Cross to be its ablest champion.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAUL'S CONVERSION AND EARLY MINISTRY.

Paul, the Persecutor [1]—On His Way to Damascus [2]—In Arabia and Damascus [3]
At Jerusalem [4]—Brought to Antioch [5]—Second Visit to Jerusalem. [6]

UP to this time, the disciples had been devout worshippers at the Temple; but the old bottles could not long contain the new wine, the new piece of cloth did not fit the old garment. The Hellenists, or Greek-speaking Jews, were less bigoted than the Palestinian Jews, and therefore more open to the influence of the Gospel. Among them was a man named Stephen, who became a convert to the religion of Christ. Since the Jews could not resist his wisdom, they resolved to silence him by might. So a charge of blasphemy was brought against him, for which he was stoned to death; and "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." This is the first time that Paul is mentioned in the New Testament. A strange zeal now inflames his soul; and he goes, with the power of inquisitor, from house to house, dragging forth the followers of Christ and casting them into prison. And when his work of havoc was finished at Jerusalem, and the disciples were scattered abroad, he determined to follow them into the cities to which they had fled. Hearing of their work at Damascus, [a] he went to the High-priest and secured letters empowering him to bring bound to Jerusalem whoever had been won over to the new faith.

With the fiery zeal of his nature wrought up to its highest persecuting pitch, Paul set out on his mission, accompanied by a band of men eager to execute his

wishes. As they neared their journey's end, they passed from a bleak and barren plain to a ridge on whose sides the wilderness blossomed like the rose. A sea of verdure next spread out before them in oriental beauty; while amid the pomegranate and the palm, the olive and the walnut, rose the terraced roofs of Damascus. It was high noon. The air was aglow with burning heat and dazzling light; but the travelers pressed on. Suddenly, above the brightness of the sun, there flashed another light. Human eye could not look upon it nor human frame endure it; and all were thrown prostrate upon the earth. And now, a strange sound was heard, like distant thunder rolling; but to Paul it was a voice calling him and saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" With trembling lips he replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the answer sounded from the skies, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest." And that proud Pharisee, humbled and subdued, exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Once more the voice replied, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." So Paul arose; but when he opened his eyes, he saw no man. And now, instead of riding through the streets and spreading terror among the followers of the Nazarene—poor, blind, trembling creature, he groped about in utter confusion, till some one, in sheer pity, took him by the hand, led him into the city, and there left him alone in his darkness. For three days, he remained blind, neither eating nor drinking. And as he lay there in deep solitude, fasting and praying, a new light streamed in upon his soul. Then Ananias, a follower of Christ, was instructed of the Lord to go to the house of Judas where Paul was lodged, and put his hands upon him that he might receive his sight.

And at his touch, the scales fell from his eyes; and he arose and was baptized—no longer Saul the persecutor; henceforth PAUL THE APOSTLE.

Immediately after his baptism, Paul began to preach the Gospel with all the energy of his renewed nature; but soon he left Damascus and retired into Arabia. Whether he sought the solitudes where Moses communed with God and Elijah was blessed with visions from the Almighty, is a matter of small consequence and simply satisfies a sentiment. This we know—it was full three years before he went up to Jerusalem, the intervening time, no doubt, being spent in meditation and prayer, and in receiving those revelations of Gospel truth which fitted him to become the Apostle of the Gentiles. On leaving Arabia, Paul again entered Damascus, preaching the Gospel with new fullness and power. This stirred up the opposition of the unbelieving Jews, who disputed with him in their synagogues. Being unable to withstand his arguments, they took counsel to kill him. In this, they were aided by the governor, who kept a guard at the gates, night and day, to prevent Paul's escape. But the disciples let him down by night in a basket from a house on the wall; and in this way they rescued him from the hands of his enemies.

Having escaped from Damascus, Paul hastened to Jerusalem. Not only did his former friends despise him; but the Apostles looked upon him with distrust. While this was disappointing, it was at least natural; for he had been their bitterest enemy. Barnabas,[b] however, had faith in Paul's sincerity. Convinced of the reality of his conversion, he introduced him to Peter and James, the brother of our Lord. So Paul remained a guest at Peter's house for fifteen days. During this time, he

preached with such power that the Jews went about to slay him. To save him from the hand of the assassin, the disciples urged him to leave the city. So they accompanied him down to Cæsarea, and then sent him forth to Tarsus.

At first, the religion of Jesus was confined to the Jews, or to those who had embraced the Jewish faith. The first step beyond the Jewish limits of Judaism was taken by Peter, who went by special revelation to Cæsarea and preached the Word to Cornelius and his household. The work among the Gentiles, however, soon had a wider range. After the martyrdom of Stephen, the disciples were scattered abroad, many of them going to the city of Antioch. Here the first Gentile Church was established: here too, the followers of Christ were first called Christians. When the news reached the Church at Jerusalem, that the Gentiles had become converts to the Christian Faith, there was no small stir about the matter. The chasm between Jew and Gentile was so wide and deep that it seemed almost impossible to bridge it over. But the issue had to be met. So they sent Barnabas to Antioch to investigate the case. Now Barnabas was a broad-minded man. He was a Hellenist, a native of Cyprus; and so he could take a larger view of things than could a Palestinian Jew. Besides, he had a benevolent disposition and was inclined to adopt conciliatory measures. When Barnabas reached Antioch, he found the Church there in good condition—Jews and Gentiles worshipping together in perfect peace. But he soon realized that it would be necessary to call in the services of an able and zealous assistant. Leaving Antioch, therefore, he went over into Cilicia, where Paul had been preaching for the last two years, and brought

him to Antioch. And here these two noble men of God labored together in the Gospel for an entire year.

There was a Christian prophet named Agabus who went from Jerusalem to Antioch and predicted that a great famine would spread over all the land of Palestine —a prophecy which was fulfilled in the reign of Claudius. During the famine, the Christians of Antioch gathered contributions for the relief of their brethren and sent them to Jerusalem by the hands of Paul and Barnabas.[d] This was Paul's second visit to the Holy City, after his conversion. As this was a time of severe persecution, it is commonly supposed that he did not meet any of the Apostles on this occasion; at all events, nothing occurred that called for Apostolic authority. Already Herod had stretched forth his hand and killed James; Peter, too, had been cast into prison; but by divine intervention he escaped and withdrew from the city. The other Apostles were evidently hiding from the wrath of Herod.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

His Solemn Ordination[1]—At Paphos[2]—At Pisidian Antioch[3]—At Lystra[4]—The Return Trip[5]—Third Visit to Jerusalem.[6]

THE fruits of the work at Antioch now became manifest. The Church had not only prospered in a general way; but it was blessed with many prophets and teachers. One day, while they were assembled for worship, the Holy Ghost signified that Barnabas and Saul should be set apart as Missionaries to carry the Gospel into other lands. After a special season of fasting and prayer, the disciples laid their hands on them and thus solemnly ordained them to their great

work. At this point, therefore, Paul begins his first great missionary journey. As yet, Barnabas holds first place; but soon the order is changed and Paul becomes the recognized leader. As they go forth, they take Mark with them; but he soon grows weary of the work and returns to Jerusalem.

Paul and Barnabas went down to the sea-coast and embarked for Cyprus,[a] the native place of Barnabas. Arriving at Salamis, they went into the synagogues and there preached the Gospel of Christ. Then crossing the island from east to west, they came to Paphos.[b] Here Sergius Paulus, the pro-consul, had his official residence. Deeply interested in matters of religion, he sent for Paul and Barnabas, desiring to hear the Word of God. A Jewish magician named Elymas—the wise man—was with him. This false prophet knew that if the pro-consul were brought under their influence he himself would lose caste with his powerful friend. So he tried to turn Sergius away from the faith. Then Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, called down the judgment of heaven, and the man was struck with blindness. When the deputy saw what was done, he was filled with wonder at the doctrine of the Lord, and became a convert to the Christian faith.

Paul and his companions now sailed from Cyprus and came to Pamphylia. After landing, Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem; but Paul, with Barnabas, pushed on to Antioch in Pisidia.[c] Here they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath, where Paul addressed the Jews, proving from their own Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. In a few sentences he traced the history of God's people, outlined the life of Christ, and emphasized the great fact of His resurrection. By way of applica-

tion, he proclaimed the forgiveness of sins to all who repent and believe, and closed with a word of warning to those who despise the Gospel. The effect of his preaching was wonderful. With one accord, they besought him to preach the same word on the next Sabbath. When the day arrived, almost the whole city came together—Jews, proselytes and Gentiles. But when the Jews saw the Gentiles coming in such crowds, their old pride was stirred up and in their bigotry they even spoke words of blasphemy. Then Paul, aroused by their bitter hate, charged upon them with all boldness and declared his purpose to turn to the Gentiles. So the Apostles began to preach to the Gentiles, not only in Antioch but throughout all the region of Pisidia. The Jews, however, soon found a way to interfere with their work. Among the proselytes were the wives of many leading citizens. These the Jews embittered against the Apostles, and they in turn stirred up their husbands to drive them out of their coasts. Paul and Barnabas, therefore, left Pisidia, shaking the very dust off their feet as a testimony against them.

From Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium.[d] Here a great multitude of Jews and Gentiles believed. But at length the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, some of whom sided with the Jews and some with the Apostles. In the strife, a plot was formed to stone them; so they left the city and went to Lystra. Among Paul's hearers at Lystra[e] was a lame man who gave earnest heed to his preaching. And when Paul perceived that the man had faith to be healed, he called upon him to stand up; and immediately he was cured. The natives were struck with amazement and cried out, "The gods are come down in the likeness of men!" And

so they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury. Then they brought oxen and garlands before the house where the Apostles were lodged, and were going to offer up sacrifices to them. When the Apostles saw these great preparations, they rushed out among the people and appealed to them to turn from such vanities and serve the living God. Shortly after this, the enemies of the Apostles came over from Antioch and Iconium, and the fickle people who could scarcely be kept from worshipping Paul as a god now stoned him till they thought him dead, and then dragged him out of the city. But as his friends stood sorrowing around him, he showed signs of life and soon arose and went into the city. On the following day, in company with Barnabas, he went to Derbe, a few miles distant. The persecuting Jews did not follow them here; so they had time to rest and opportunity to preach the Gospel in peace.

With his work at Derbe[f] Paul ended his first missionary journey. He might have gone down through the Cilician Pass to Tarsus, and a short sea-voyage would have landed him in Antioch; but instead of this he retraced his steps. From Derbe, therefore, Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia. From Antioch they came down to Perga, where they first landed when they came over from Cyprus. In going, they had merely passed through Perga; but now they tarried for some time, preaching the Gospel. Leaving Perga, they went down to the sea-coast and took ship for Antioch. Thus closed Paul's first missionary journey. He had preached the Gospel in the island of Cyprus and throughout three districts of Asia Minor. He had established four Churches—at Antioch in Pisidia, at Iconium, at Lystra and at Derbe.

Up to this time the Jewish and Gentile Christians at Antioch had lived together in loving fellowship; but now certain Judaizing Christians came to Antioch and insisted that circumcision was essential to salvation. It was but natural that they should contend for this ancient rite. It was instituted in the days of Abraham. It was established in the Mosaic ritual, set there by God Himself as the badge of His covenant with His people. The question, therefore, was a vital one. In order to settle it, the Church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the Apostles and Elders. The Church at Jerusalem cordially received the delegates from Antioch and listened with joy to their account of the Gentile ingathering. At first, Paul had a private interview with the Apostles; then the whole Church came together. After much dispute, Peter stood up and told how the Gentiles by his mouth had heard the Gospel and believed. Then Paul and Barnabas related their experience among the Gentiles. After that, James arose with strong Scripture arguments, backing up what Peter had said. The result was that the law of Moses touching circumcision, was not held as binding upon the Gentiles; but certain restrictions were put upon them to guard against offense and for the sake of pure living. Judas and Silas, members of the Church at Jerusalem, went to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. The members of the Church were then called together; the decree of the Apostles and Elders was read in their presence; harmony was once more restored; and Jewish and Gentile Christians again met on a common footing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Paul's Dispute with Barnabas [1]—Visits the Churches [2]—Passes Through Phrygia and Galatia [3]—Is Joined by Luke [4]—In the Stocks at Philippi [5]—The Tumult at Thessalonica [6]—Preaching at Athens [7]—Turning to the Gentiles at Corinth [8]—Fourth Visit to Jerusalem [9].

AFTER remaining for some time at Antioch,[a] Paul suggested a second tour among the Churches. Barnabas proposed that they take Mark with them; but Paul objected because in their former trip Mark left them as soon as they touched the shores of Asia Minor. A sharp dispute arose and the feeling became so bitter that they parted company. Painful as was the separation, they were not estranged from their work, neither were they lacking in mutual sympathy. Paul makes fraternal mention of Barnabas in his Epistles and afterwards even made use of Mark in his ministry.

After parting, never to meet again on earth, Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus; Paul, having chosen Silas, went through Syria[b] and Cilicia. Landing in Cilicia, Paul's first visit would be to his native city, Tarsus. From Tarsus, he would go up through the mountain pass and stop at Derbe[c]—the point where he had ended his first missionary journey. From Derbe, he went to Lystra, where he was joined by Timothy, who had become a convert on his first visit to that city. And from Lystra, he went to Iconium. This completes the round of visitation among the Churches.

Paul now entered new territory, going "throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia." The Galatians were

the Gauls of the East—a mixed race of the original inhabitants and their Gaulish conquerors. There was also a peculiar admixture of Judaistic and heathen elements; and this accounts for the extremes that Paul met there—men now zealous for the truth, now turning to false teachers. Easy to be impressed and eager to learn, they gladly received the Gospel; and so hearty was their reception of Paul that they welcomed him as an angel from heaven. So great success attended his work among these people that it was said, "Manlius subdued them by the arms of Rome; Paul, by the sword of the Spirit."

Paul now proceeded westward to the thickly settled districts of Asia. Here Rome ruled and Roman civilization prevailed. But the Spirit did not suffer him to enter this section. And as he essayed to enter Mysia and Bithynia, the same divine impulse kept him from his purpose. In this latter province is situated the city of Nice, where the First General Council was held. At that Council, a Confession was adopted against the Arians, called *The Nicene Creed*, which is repeated in our Churches, each Communion Sunday, in place of the Apostles' Creed. Passing this province, Paul at length arrived at Troas,[d] a seaport at the entrance of the Hellespont. Here he was joined by Luke, the writer of the Acts of the Apostles. Luke was a physician; and some writers, who labor to assign a natural cause for each new turn in events, suppose that he accompanied Paul because of his ill-health.

Paul was impelled by a vision to leave Troas and go to Philippi.[e] This was the first city in Europe where life and liberty came through the Gospel. Here he continued to preach for some time, but his work was not to go unchallenged. A certain damsel, possessed with a

spirit of divination, had been cured by him. This enraged her masters; for she had been a source of great gain to them. So they caught Paul and Silas and dragged them before the magistrate, who at once gave orders that they should be scourged and cast into prison. As they lay in the inner ward, that night, their feet fast in stocks, they sang hymns of praise to God. And suddenly, there was an earthquake which shook the building, threw all the doors open, and broke off the prisoners' bonds. The jailor supposed that all had escaped, and was about to kill himself, when Paul cried out, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here!" Then rushing in, the man fell trembling before Paul and Silas, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In reply, Paul spoke to him the word of the Lord: and he believed and was baptized. Next morning, the magistrates ordered the prisoners to be set free; but Paul stood for his rights as a Roman citizen and demanded that they themselves come and release them. Then the magistrates came and brought them out and begged them to leave the city. Paul and Silas, therefore, departed; but Timothy and Luke remained and ministered to the people.

The principal synagogue of Macedonia was in Thessalonica.[f] Thither Paul resorted, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with the Jews, showing them from the Scriptures that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. A few of them believed; but the greater number of converts were Greeks. As a result, a flourishing Church was formed, composed chiefly of Gentiles. Filled with envy at his success, the Jews raised a tumult against Paul and his companions. Then they attacked the house of Jason; but not finding the Apostles there, they dragged Jason before the authorities and demanded assurances of peace. When night

came, Paul and Silas withdrew and went southward to Berea.[g] At Paul's preaching, the Bereans examined the Scriptures, comparing them with the arguments of Paul; and finding a perfect agreement, they gladly received the Gospel. But certain Jews of Thessalonica, followed Paul to Berea and stirred up such opposition against him that he departed, leaving the work in the hands of Silas and Timothy.

Paul next went to Athens,[h] the great center of Greek learning. This city was full of idols,—grand masterpieces of Grecian art. Paul could not keep quiet in the midst of such idolatry. He not only preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath; but each day he ventured to dispute in the market-place. People eagerly listened to him; but opinion was divided. Some called him a babbler; others regarded him as a setter forth of strange gods. Then certain philosophers conducted him to the Areopagus,[i] where he delivered his celebrated speech to the men of Athens. His address met with indifferent results. Some mocked; others said, "We will hear thee again." And yet, it was not without its direct blessing; for "Certain men clave unto him and believed."

From Athens, Paul went to Corinth,[j] a center of commerce, with Venus the goddess of love as its patron deity. Here he met Aquila and his wife Priscilla, refugees from Rome. Here, too, he went into the synagogue every Sabbath and reasoned with the Jews. And when Silas and Timothy joined him, he spoke with more boldness, declaring that Jesus is the Christ. The Jews opposed him and blasphemed; but Paul rebuked them for their unbelief and then turned to the Gentiles. After a time, Gallio became proconsul of Achaia, and the Jews seized the opportunity to drag Paul before his judgment-seat.

But he refused to have anything to do with a question of religion and drove the Jews from his presence. So Paul, in his work at Corinth, enjoyed the protection of the Roman Government.

Paul and his companions, including Aquila and Priscilla, now left Corinth. Going down to Cenchrea, [k] the eastern port of the city, they set sail for Ephesus. Here Paul made but a short stay; long enough, however, to enter the synagogue and reason with the Jews. He met with a cordial reception, the people desiring him to tarry with them. But he declined, promising, if it were God's will, to return and minister to them. One of the great Jewish feasts was at hand, and he was anxious to reach Jerusalem and take part in it. So he crossed the sea from Ephesus to Cæsarea and went up to the Feast. This was his fourth visit to the Holy City since he became a missionary of the Cross. Leaving Silas there, he and Timothy went to Antioch, the point from which he had started. Thus ended his second great missionary journey. Besides visiting the Churches he had previously established, he preached in Phrygia and Galatia, and passing over to Europe, planted Churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth, and proclaimed the Gospel at Athens.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Paul's Tour of Visitation [1]—At Ephesus [2]—His Trouble with the Shrine-makers [9]—Through Macedonia [4]—Overland to Philippi [5]—Preaching through the Night [6]—The Elders of Ephesus Meet Him [7]—A Rest-day at Cæsarea. [8]

PAUL began his third missionary journey,[a] like the second, with a tour of visitation, closing up at Ephesus.[b] His companions were Timothy and Titus. Ephesus was one of the great cities of the world when Paul lived there. That which gave it special fame was the celebrated temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. Its chief attraction was the image of Diana—a rude figure which, they claimed, had fallen down from Jupiter. It was also noted for its immense theatre, one capable of holding 50,000 spectators. For three years Paul preached the Gospel in this city, healing the infirmities of the people. In imitation of his work certain vagabond Jews tried to drive out an evil spirit; but the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped upon them and overcame them. When this became known Jews and Greeks alike were filled with awe, and the name of Jesus was magnified. As a result they renounced their superstitions and burned their books of magic.

As Ephesus was a center of trade and a shrine of heathen worship, multitudes flocked thither from all parts of the land. Hence the fame of Paul was not confined to the city. Besides, he had gathered around him a large company of co-workers who went throughout the province preaching the Gospel. It is to this period, therefore, that

some refer the planting of the Seven Churches. So successful was this entire work, that its effect upon the worship of Diana began to be observed. This led Demetrius; and others of his craft to complain that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, Paul had persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands.

The preaching of Christ, therefore, had interfered with the sale of shrines, small models of the temple, containing an image of the goddess. Headed by Demetrius, the shrine-makers filled the city with confusion, shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Then they seized two of Paul's companions and dragged them into the theatre, where the whole multitude was wrought up to the highest frenzy, and for the space of two hours wildly beat the air and kept up the continuous cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" At length, their fury having spent itself in empty shouts, the uproar began to subside and the town-clerk addressed the people, appeasing them by a flattering reference to the great goddess, appealing to their courts of justice and showing them the danger of incurring the wrath of the Romans because of the day's tumult.

After the uproar at Ephesus, in which the Apostles experienced the full fury of heathen hostility, Paul set out for Macedonia.[c] While there he visited Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea—in fact, on across as far as Illyricum. Then he went to Corinth to winter there. Along with his missionary labor in that city, a greater work engaged his energies—the writing of an Epistle to the Romans. The Church at Rome had not been planted by Paul; but existing as it did in the great metropolis of the world he was impressed with its vast

importance. What it needed, above all, was a positive faith; and in striving to sum up, concisely and pointedly, the fundamental principles of the Gospel, Paul has given us in this Epistle, a hand-book of theological learning.

In his round of visitation, Paul not only confirmed the disciples in the faith, but also gathered contributions for the needy saints at Jerusalem. This work finished, he purposed going up to Jerusalem to the feast of Pentecost. He had planned to sail from Corinth directly to Antioch, but was thwarted in his purpose by a conspiracy of the Jews.[d] So he made an overland trip to Philippi, arriving there about the time of the Passover. A noble band of companions had gone in advance—some, associates in his work; others, messengers to carry the contributions to Jerusalem. Among these were Sopater of Berea, whom Paul calls his kinsman; Aristarchus of Thessalonica, who was with Paul at Ephesus during the riot; Secundus, also a member of the Church at Thessalonica; Gaius, a native of Derbe; Timothy, Paul's spiritual son; Tychicus, afterwards appointed messenger to carry the Epistles to Ephesus and Colosse; and Trophimus, who later became the innocent cause of Paul's imprisonment.

These men had gone in advance to Troas,[e] while Paul and Luke tarried at Philippi till after the feast of the Passover. Then they left Philippi and in five days reached Troas. Paul had been there full seven days, preaching the Gospel and confirming the disciples. On the eighth day, the first day of the week, the members of the Church came together in an upper room for worship. As they could not leave their work to attend such a service during the day, they gathered after sunset. Here

Paul continued preaching till midnight, when his discourse was interrupted by an accident. A youth, named Eutychus, who was sitting in a window, became overcome with sleep, fell from the third story, and was taken up dead. Paul went down and, after the manner of Elijah and Elisha, restored him to life. Returning to the upper chamber, he broke bread and ate with the disciples, tarrying with them till the break of day.

To gain time, Paul had sent his companions by ship round the promontory of Lectum to Assos[f] —a distance of more than forty miles; while he himself took the shorter route on foot. Here he joined them and, touching several points, a few days' sail brought them to Miletus.[g] As Paul was anxious to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, he had sailed past Ephesus. But now, the vessel remaining a few days at Miletus, he sent to Ephesus asking the Elders of the Church to come and meet him. When they were assembled, he delivered to them his celebrated farewell address. Referring to his labors among them, and the wicked plotting of the Jews, he told them of the warnings he had received of the bonds and afflictions that awaited him at Jerusalem. He warned them against false teachers who, like grievous wolves, might enter in among them, not sparing the flock. And then, "he kneeled down and prayed with them all: and they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words that he spake, that they should see his face no more."

Taking ship, Paul sailed to Tyre,[h] where he spent a whole week with the disciples. On his departure, they accompanied him, with their wives and children, to the seashore, where all kneeled down together and prayed before he boarded the ship. From Tyre, they sailed to

Ptolemais,[i] and proceeded by land to Cæsarea,[j] where Philip the deacon had his home. Paul tarried at the house of Philip till it was time to go up to the feast of Pentecost—the first real rest that had come to him in many years. It reminds us of that rest-day that Jesus enjoyed at Bethany, before going up to Jerusalem to suffer. And now Agabus came to Cæsarea to warn Paul of what awaited him at Jerusalem. Binding his own hands with Paul's girdle, he declared that so should the Jews bind its owner and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Then all the Christians of Cæsarea, as well as Paul's companions, joined in a common appeal that he should not go up to Jerusalem. But they could not prevail upon him to depart from his purpose. Only three days now remained till the day of Pentecost; and Jerusalem was sixty miles distant. Like his Master, he set his face steadfastly toward the Holy City. And so, attended by several of the disciples from Cæsarea and those who had accompanied him in his journeys, he entered Jerusalem—his fifth and last visit since his conversion. It was also the end of his third and last great missionary journey, which included the provinces of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia.

CHAPTER XX.

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AND DEATH.

Paul's Last Visit to Jerusalem —His Defence Before the Jewish Mob [2]—Is Made a Prisoner [3]—His Prison-life at Cæsarea [4]—Before Agrippa [5]—Voyage to Rome [6] Imprisonment at Rome [7]—His Death. [8]

ON reaching Jerusalem,[a] Paul was not only an object of hatred to the unbelieving Jews; but the Jewish Christians regarded him as an apostate from the Law of Moses. To set himself right before the Christians, he was prevailed upon to bear the expense of the purification of four Nazarites. Meantime, certain Jews from Ephesus recognized him in the Temple, and arousing a tumult, they set upon him with the cry, "Men of Israel, help!" The people rushed in from all sides, dragged him out of the Temple, and would have killed him, had it not been for the timely arrival of a band of Roman soldiers, who bound Paul and carried him to the fort. As they reached the stairs, the maddened mob made such a rush that Paul had to be borne in the soldiers' arms. For the present he was safe.

A halt was now made, and Paul stood on the stairs and delivered his celebrated defence before the Jews. He gave a simple account of his life: but when he touched upon his divine commission, the storm of fury broke forth afresh, and the multitude shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth!" With frantic gestures, they cast off their clothes and threw dust in the air and raged about in helpless fury. Lysias, the officer in charge, then hurried Paul into the castle and gave orders that he should be scourged. But as they were binding him to the whipping-post, Paul appealed to his rights as

a Roman citizen and thus escaped the lash. He was next brought before the Jewish Council, where with great tact he directed his address to the Pharisees, declaring his hope in the Messiah and his belief in the resurrection of the dead. This created a division which developed into a wild tumult. Fearing that Paul would be torn to pieces by the frenzied Jews, Lysias sent soldiers to bring him back to the castle by force.

Some Jewish fanatics now bound themselves with a great curse that they would not eat till they had killed Paul. The plot, however, was discovered and Lysias at once sent him to Cæsarea with a powerful escort. He also forwarded a letter to Felix, the procurator, explaining the case and informing him that the prisoner was a Roman citizen. Five days after, Ananias the High-priest and the Elders of the Jews came down to Cæsarea. They appeared before Felix as Paul's accusers, and their orator, a certain Tertullus, made an artful, flattering speech to gain the good will of the governor, and then charged Paul with being a pestilent fellow—a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. Paul was then given an opportunity to speak, and in reply took up the charges brought against him, and refuted every one of them. Felix postponed the further hearing of the case till the arrival of Lysias, meantime committing Paul to the custody of a centurion, with instructions to give him special privileges. In a short time, Felix sent for Paul, desiring to hear more concerning the faith in Christ; and the Apostle so reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, that Felix trembled.

After two years, a new governor took the place of Felix. His name was Festus—a man of different mold from his predecessor, his rule being one of strict justice.

On his arrival at Jerusalem, the High-priest and chief rulers tried to have him pronounce judgment against Paul. They asked that he be brought back to Jerusalem, their purpose being to kill him on the way. Festus proposed that they accompany him to Cæsarea and there he would investigate the charges against Paul. In the trial which followed, Festus asked Paul if he would go to Jerusalem and there be judged in his presence. But Paul, fearing treachery, exercised his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to Cæsar. Then Festus pronounced the only decision that was possible: "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar; unto Cæsar shalt thou go!"

About this time King Agrippa came to Cæsarea to congratulate the new governor. Festus mentioned the case of Paul to Agrippa, who expressed a wish to hear the Apostle. On the following day, Agrippa sat in state with Festus and the chief men of the city, and Paul was brought before them. In his address, he referred to the Messianic hope, and held that it was fulfilled in Jesus. He then gave an account of his conversion and followed with an explicit statement of his case. But when he spoke of the resurrection, Festus interrupted him with the exclamation, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad!" But in reply, the Apostle brought the truth home to the king's conscience, with the appeal, "King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest!" The king was startled at the directness of this appeal; but waved aside the heart-searching question with an evasive reply of mingled confession and contempt.

Paul was finally sent to Rome. There were no government ships used for transporting prisoners, the great lines of commercial traffic being employed for that pur-

pose. On one of these vessels, Paul now sailed. Luke and Aristarchus accompanied him. Starting from Cæsarea, they sailed the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia, and on reaching the port of Myra,[c] found a corn-ship of Alexandria bound for Italy. The winds being contrary, they did not reach Crete[d] till the middle of autumn—too late to gain the Italian shores before winter. Against Paul's advice, they embarked for Phenice.[e] Encountering a terrible storm, they were shipwrecked off the coast of Malta, whose inhabitants treated them with kindness. It was here, while making a fire, that a viper fastened upon the hand of Paul; and when he shook it off without receiving harm, the natives looked upon him as a god. Paul was ever active for good. On the voyage, he had won the favor of Julius, the centurion in charge; and now he gains the good will of the Roman Governor by curing his father of a fever. After three months they sailed from Malta; and with favorable winds, soon reached Puteoli,[g] the Roman port for the corn trade. Here Paul tarried for seven days, after which he proceeded north along the Appian Way,[h] where he was met by many Roman Christians who had heard of his landing. And now, in company with these brethren in the faith, he entered Rome.[i]

Three days after his arrival, Paul called together the leading Jews and explained the cause of his imprisonment. At the same time he showed them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. Some of them were convinced; but the majority remained unbelieving. Two full years passed by before Paul had a hearing. His imprisonment, however, was light. It was, indeed, under military restraint; but it protected him from the fury of the Jews. During this time he freely preached

the Gospel and wrote several of his Epistles. Many of the soldiers who guarded him became converts to Christianity, and even members of the household of Cæsar were won over to the new faith. Besides this he had many fellow-workers in the imperial city, the most of them having shared in his missionary journeys. The care of all the Churches was yet upon him; and he daily prayed for the coming of the kingdom and the peace of the people.

After two years' imprisonment the Apostle was set free and went forth again to preach the Gospel. Christianity was not merely a persecuted religion—it had become a crime against Roman Law; and under the power of that law Paul soon fell. His second imprisonment was not marked by that freedom which he formerly enjoyed at Rome; but now he was treated as an evil-doer. His trial, therefore, speedily took place; and the sentence was speedily carried out. As a Christian he was a traitor, and as a traitor he must die—not by crucifixion, but, being a Roman citizen, by decapitation. And so once more the bloody axe of Nero did its bloody work.

CHAPTER XXI.

MINOR NEW TESTAMENT CHARACTERS.

Mark —Luke[1]—Barnabas[2]—Timothy[4]—Titus[5]—Dorcas[6]—Lydia.[7]

THERE are several New Testament Characters whose lives are closely linked with those of the Apostles; and though they are incidentally touched upon in other chapters, still they merit special notice. They are all marked by strict fidelity to the faith of the Gospel and spent their days in loving service for the spread of the truth.

We begin with JOHN MARK, son of a certain Mary, whose house in Jerusalem was the resort of many believers. John was his Jewish name, Mark his Roman surname. Two things distinguished the life of this man; he was the writer of the Gospel which bears his name, and he was a co-laborer of the Apostles. As he was not an eye-witness of the things recorded in his Gospel, it is commonly agreed that, if not a mere interpreter of Peter, he has given in his Gospel a reproduction of Peter's preaching. Mark was a cousin of Barnabas, and accompanied him and Paul on their first missionary journey as far as Perga.[a] Here, for some reason, he withdrew from them and returned to Jerusalem, a fact which afterwards led to that serious dispute between Paul and Barnabas. Later, however, Paul used Mark in his ministry, calling him his co-laborer and requesting Timothy to send him to Rome. Mark is last mentioned in Scripture as going with Peter to Babylon; but of the purpose and effect of this visit, there is no

record. There is a tradition that after Peter's death, he went to Alexandria, in Egypt; and there, having established a Church of which he was the first pastor, suffered martyrdom.

LUKE, "the beloved physician," was the writer of two New Testament books—the Gospel which bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles. According to tradition, he was born at Antioch in Syria, and came under the power of Paul's preaching. After his conversion he takes his place as a follower of the great Apostle and joins his company at Troas[b] on the second missionary journey, going with him as far as Philippi. At this point he is left behind and does not join the Apostolic company again, till Paul's arrival at Philippi[c] on his third missionary journey. It is supposed that during these years—seven in all—Luke tarried at Philippi, preaching the Gospel. And now he remains with Paul, passing with him through Miletus, Tyre and Cæsarea, on to Jerusalem, and finally accompanies him when he is taken as a prisoner to Rome. After the martyrdom of St. Paul, we know absolutely nothing of Luke. A vague tradition pictures him as preaching the Gospel in Greece, where the idolatrous priests became so enraged against him that they put him to death.

The word BARNABAS[d] signifies "son of prophecy" or "exhortation." It is the name given by the Apostles to Joseph, a Levite of the island of Cyprus. Being in Jerusalem at the founding of the Christian Church, he became one of the first converts to the new faith and with uncommon zeal sold his Cyprian possessions and laid their price at the Apostles' feet. It was he who commended Paul to the Apostles; for after the conversion of that bitter persecutor, the Christians were slow

to admit him to their fellowship. When word reached Jerusalem that the Gentiles of Antioch had received the Gospel, Barnabas was sent thither to inquire into the matter; and finding many converts there, he hastened to Tarsus and brought back Paul as specially fitted to preach the Word to this receptive people. From this date his labors with the great Apostle, which were ended by the dispute over John Mark, as they were about to enter upon their second missionary journey. Barnabas, thereupon, took Mark and sailed for Cyprus; but it is a significant fact that at this point ends all Scripture reference to him or his labors. An Apocryphal work gives an account of his second missionary trip to Cyprus and his death by martyrdom there.

TIMOTHY was born at Lystra, in Lycaonia, the fruit of a mixed marriage between a Gentile father and a Jewish mother. He was piously trained by his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice; and thus prepared, while yet a boy, to accept the Gospel which he had heard from the lips of Paul on his first missionary journey. When the Apostle came to Lystra on his round of visitation, the favorable reports which he received of Timothy led him to take the youth along as a companion. Paul therefore took Timothy and solemnly ordained him to the Gospel ministry. We find him repeatedly with the Apostle, accompanying him on his journeys and engaging with him in the preaching of the Gospel. We have no trace of him during Paul's two years' imprisonment at Cæsarea; but find him in his company shortly after he reached Rome. After his second imprisonment the Apostle expresses the earnest hope that he may see his faithful disciple once again; and it is not unreasonable to conjecture that the last

hours of the great Apostle were cheered by his comforting presence. Tradition tells us that Timothy died the martyr's death. He had protested against the lewd enactments connected with a great heathen carnival, and the infuriated mob beat him to death with clubs.

TITUS deserves a place in this list. He is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles; but reference is made to him in several of the Epistles. He is expressly mentioned as going with Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem, when the great question of Christian liberty was to be decided. We next find him at Ephesus, from which point he was to proceed to Troas where he would meet Paul; but, failing in this he joined the Apostle in Macedonia, after which he was sent a second time to Corinth to attend to the collection for the poor Christians in Judea. Some time elapses before we come upon him again. Meantime Paul has been released at Rome, and he with Titus has gone to Crete. This faithful disciple is also with the Apostle during his last imprisonment at Rome. The more trustworthy traditions represent him as becoming a permanent bishop in the island of Crete, where he died at an advanced age. A ruined church of ancient masonry bears the name of St. Titus, and occasional services are held in it by priests from a neighboring hamlet.

Two women figure prominently in the Acts of the Apostles—Dorcas and Lydia. DORCAS, also called Tabitha, was a disciple of Joppa. She was a woman full of good works and is particularly mentioned as making clothes for the poor. While Peter was at Lydda, a neighboring town, Dorcas died; and the disciples sent word to him, begging him to come with all speed. Upon Peter's arrival the body of Dorcas was already

prepared for burial, being laid in an upper room. Entering the chamber of the dead, he put them all forth; then with a prayer for divine assistance he commanded her to arise. Opening her eyes, she sat up; and with the aid of the Apostle she arose from her couch and was delivered to her friends. In recognition of her life of charity many women's societies in the Church, engaged in providing for the poor, honor her memory by adopting her name. LYDIA was a native of Thyatira, in the province of Asia; but for the purposes of trade she had a temporary residence at Philippi. To her belongs the special distinction of being the first convert to Christianity in Europe. She was a Jewish proselyte, and in company with other devout women was at the river-side engaged in Sabbath-worship, when Paul came into their midst and preached the Gospel. At once the Lord opened her heart to the truth; and she invited Paul and Silas to her home, where she ministered to their wants. Her entire household became converts to the Christian faith; and to her is attributed the entrance of the Gospel into her native city.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FIRST FAMILY.

The Beginning[1]—The First Man[2]—The Tree of Knowledge[3]—The First Woman[4]—The Fall[5]—The First Children[6]—The First Offerings[7]—The First Murder[8]—The First Descendants.[9]

IN spite of the long series of centuries that have come and gone since God created man in His own image, the record of nations is marvellously complete, and scarcely a man has done a distinctively wonderful deed —good or bad—whose praise or blame has not been spread upon history's page. In round figures, the human race is six thousand years old; but the deeds of the first man and the first woman are written in a Book which shall last till the elements melt with fervent heat; and even then its principles shall endure; for heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Word of Truth shall never pass away.

The name given in the Bible to the first man is ADAM, a word whose root-meaning would constantly remind him of the ground out of which he was formed. But as the crowning work of creation, Adam had more than an animal nature linking him to earth; for God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul! Made in the image of his Maker—not a likeness of form but an image of attributes, with a moral and spiritual nature, too, which distinguished him from every other creature of earth, the man Adam was placed in a Garden which the Lord had prepared for him—the Garden of Eden[a] —to dress and keep it.

Every earthly thing that God had made was for Adam's enjoyment—the plants and trees, birds and

beasts: they were to be food for him; they were to serve him. Only the fruit of a single tree was withheld; and the command was, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:" while the consequences of disobedience were just as clearly indicated in the added words, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." And now as a pledge of Adam's dominion over every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, the Lord caused them to pass in review before him, so that he might name each according to its nature, thus calling into activity the powers of his mind and exercising them in free, independent thought.

As Adam gave names to the animals which, it would seem, appeared before him in pairs, the thought that he of all God's creatures was alone would awaken within him a longing for a kindred companion. And in answer to the desire of his heart, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him; and as he slept the Lord took from his side one of his ribs which he fashioned into a woman. And as Adam looked upon her and named her he said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," words expressive of the nearness of the marriage relation—that fellowship of love whose oneness is as real and essential, in a social sense, as is the bodily organism in a physical sense—that sacred tie which should be broken only in death. And now, happy in their Eden home,

> "Perfection crowned the wondrous frame,
> And peace and plenty smiled around,
> They felt no grief, they knew no shame,
> But tasted heaven on earthly ground."

But the stage of innocency soon passed away. Satan

entered Eden in the form of a serpent and beguiled EVE into a violation of the one command which God had given, telling her that by partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, their eyes would be opened, they could discern between good and evil—in short, they should be as gods! And as she gazed upon the tempting tree—good, as it appeared, for food; pleasant to the eyes; and able to make one wise—her appetite was so inflamed that she took of its fruit and also gave it to her husband. And now, the consciousness of guilt seizes their souls and manifests itself in a sense of shame—their sense of shame prompting them to conceal their nakedness with a girdle of leaves, and their consciousness of sin causing them to hide from the presence of the Almighty. And when the Lord called them out from among the trees of the garden, after cursing the serpent, He pronounced sentence upon each—upon the woman, sorrow and subjection; upon the man, toil and trouble; while the earthly end of both is emphasized by the startling declaration, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return!"

The sentence is at once executed. The guilty pair are driven out of Paradise; angels are stationed to guard its gateway; while a flaming sword kept the Tree of Life, lest they should return, partake of its fruit, and their sin and shame thus become eternal. And now the human race is increased by the birth of two sons—the elder of whom Eve called CAIN, the younger ABEL. The name of the former marks the mother's transport of joy; for, trusting that he was the promised seed that should bruise the serpent's head, she exclaimed, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." The name of the latter tells her disappointment or, it may be, has a touch of

the prophetic; for it means *breath*, *vapor*—something which soon passes away! These two sons not only followed different employments—Cain being a tiller of the ground and Abel a keeper of sheep; but they had widely differing temperaments. Cain was envious and avaricious, while Abel was generous and just. Surely the sorrows of the mother shall be multiplied!

From the beginning, obligation to God, involving sacrifice for sin, filled the minds of the children of men. The sons of Adam, each in his own way, brought an offering before the Lord—Abel, the firstlings of the flock; and Cain, the fruit of the field. God, however, did not have respect for the offering of Cain—there was evil in his heart; but Abel's offering was acceptable unto Him; for it was made "By Faith." Besides, Cain's offering merely recognized God as his Maker; while that of Abel had reference to the promised Redeemer. As a result, Cain's heart was filled with hatred; and although the Almighty admonished him, he wickedly plotted against his brother's life and slew him.

The Lord called Cain to account for this awful deed; but the man feigned ignorance of his brother's absence and said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Then the Lord charged him directly with the crime and pronounced judgment against him, at which the wretched criminal cried out, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" Hate had done its work and now remorse set in—the terrible looking for of vengeance; but the Lord put a mark upon Cain and pronounced a sevenfold vengeance upon the man that should slay him.

Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, journeying east of Eden to the land of Nod. Here he begat sons and daughters, and his descendants greatly

increased. Here, too, he built a city and named it after his son Enoch. In the line of descent, follow several important names. LAMECH [b] introduced poligamy; JABAL took up the nomadic life and herded cattle; JUBAL invented the psaltery and gave melody to music; TUBAL-CAIN was a man of great strength and exercised his skill in forging metals; while to NAAMAH, the daughter of Lamech, is credited the art of spinning and weaving. And now, though a high degree of civilization had been attained, there was violence and gross godlessness; and while there were men who called upon the name of the Lord, the evil was gaining ground, until the wickedness of man was great in the earth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SETH AND HIS DESCENDANTS.

Seth [1]—The Sethites and Cainites [2]—Noah and the Ark [3]—The Flood [4]—The Waters Abate [5]—The Covenant [6]—The Tower of Babel [7]—The Sons of Noah. [8]

AFTER the murder of Abel and the banishment of Cain, SETH was born. His name is significant—implying, as it does, that he was *put* in the place of his murdered brother, a second Abel. To him was born a son whom he named Enoch. It was during his lifetime that forms of worship were instituted. And now, there follows but a series of names, with little or no distinguishing traits—Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch—who walked with God and was not, for God took him, Methuselah [a]—who lived nearly a thousand years, and Lamech—the father of Noah. When men began to multiply, wickedness prevailed and the earth was filled

with violence. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

NOAH, the son of Lamech and grandson of Methusaleh, was the tenth in descent from Adam in the line of Seth. In the midst of the world's sorrow—its toil and trouble—the devout father, wearied with the curse that rested upon the earth, still looked hopefully into the future, as he named his son, Noah; for, said he, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands." And so he was cheered with the prospect of REST! Up to this time, the two families—the descendants of Seth and Cain—had kept apart. The former had remained faithful in their worship of God; the latter lived only for the lust of the world. But now, these two tribes began to intermarry—the sons of the righteous Sethites wedding the daughters of the ungodly Cainites; and, though their children were mighty men—even men of renown,[b] yet the wicked prevailed and plunged both families into a hopeless state of corruption.

In that mass of wicked men, there was one man who was just in his generation—one who walked with God; and that man was Noah. And so, when the earth had fallen into hopeless wickedness and God resolved to destroy it, He made choice of Noah to preserve the race alive. To this end, the Lord commanded Noah to build an ark. It was to be made of gopher wood—a light and durable kind of timber, used by the ancients in ship-building; it was to be pitched inside and out, to make it watertight; it was to be built up into three stories and divided into numerous compartments, for the storage of food and the distribution of beasts. And into it were to be taken Noah and his family, together with all kinds of land-creatures, clean and unclean.

The ark was finished, its living freight was gathered in, and the door was shut by the hand of Jehovah. And then followed seven days of solemn waiting, after which the windows of heaven were opened and the floods of water swept down upon the earth. In all that terrible destruction, we hear no cry; we see no struggle. Painters have pictured the awful scene; poets have described it; but the sacred record maintains its simplicity as it sums it all up in one brief sentence, "And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both men and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." [c]

At length, the flood-gates of heaven were closed; a strong wind passed over the earth; and the waters began to abate. Finally, the floods fell into their natural channels and the ark found a resting-place upon the mountains of Ararat. Forty days after the tops of the mountains were seen, Noah opened the window and sent forth a raven, which flew to and fro till the waters were dried up. Then he sent forth a dove; but the dove found no rest for its foot and returned to the ark. After seven days, he sent forth the dove again; and it returned in the evening with an olive leaf in its mouth. Again he waited seven days; after which he sent forth the dove a third time; but it did not return—an evidence that the flood had passed away. And now, at the call of God, Noah leaves the ark—he and his entire family; and he also brought forth every living thing that was with him.

The first thing that Noah did after leaving the ark was to build an altar. Then he took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered sacrifice. And then

—adopting the language of earth—"The Lord smelled a sweet savor, and He said in His heart, I will not curse the ground any more for man's sake; neither will I again smite any more every living thing as I have done." Following this, the Lord blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." After giving him dominion over the creatures of the earth, He next made a law, looking to the security of human life; and appointed the rainbow as a token of His covenant with men. Noah now turned his attention to agriculture and planted a vineyard. Drinking of the fruit of the vine, he became intoxicated, shamefully exposing himself in his own tent; and the act of coarse mockery on the part of Ham, led to a curse which fell upon the son of Ham in awful fulfillment. This was connected with prophetic blessings upon his other sons, after which there is but a single record of Noah—the brief statement of his death.

The family of Noah, it would seem, did not wander from the mountains of Armenia, but kept close to the place where the ark had rested. However, as they began to multiply, they were seized with an impulse to leave that primitive spot; and the most of them journeyed eastward to the plain of Shinar.[d] Attracted by its beauty and fertility, they picked upon it as their permanent abode. A single aim inspires them now—they will build a city and a tower[e] whose top shall reach unto heaven; and they will make for themselves a name, lest they be scattered over the face of the earth. As yet, they all spoke one language. And now, in order to frustrate their design, which was at once selfish and shortsighted, the Lord came down and confounded their speech, so that they could no longer understand each other. As

was natural, the work was suddenly brought to a close and the people were scattered abroad. Because of this confusion of tongues, the place was called Babel—the first beginnings of the city of Babylon, and the renowned capital of Chaldea.

SHEM was the eldest son of Noah. At the time of the flood, he was nearly one hundred years old. The descendants of Shem occupied the territory that stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, including Syria, Chaldea, and parts of Assyria, Persia, and the Arabian Peninsula—thus intersecting the possessions of Ham and Japheth. From the order in which the names of the sons of Noah are given—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—one would infer that JAPHETH was the youngest. Such, however, is not the case. In fact, some regard him as the eldest. But many considerations lead to the inference that Japheth, in point of age, stands between Shem and Ham. The descendants of Japheth occupy "The isles of the Gentiles"—the coast-lands of the Mediterranean, and extending north over the most of Europe and a large part of Asia. HAM was the youngest son of Noah. He is the only one who gave his name to a country—Egypt being recognized, in the Bible, as the land of Ham. In the dispersion, therefore, of the sons of Noah, Europe was settled chiefly by Japheth; Asia, by Shem; and Africa, by Ham. Of these three heads of nations, the succeeding chapters deal principally with Shem, from whom descended the Hebrew race.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

From Ur to Haran[1]—From Haran to Canaan[2]—The Promised Land[3]—Down into Egypt[4]—Back to Bethel[5]—The Rescue of Lot[6]—Melchizedek[7]—The Great Covenant.[8]

NINE generations have passed away since the flood; and the tenth enters upon the scene of action. In the development of God's plan, Terah[a] the son of Nahor leaves Ur[b] of the Chaldees, and takes his course toward the land of Canaan—six hundred miles due west. Abram his son was reared, not only in the midst of an idolatrous people, but in an idolatrous home. There are many legends as to his early belief in the one true God; but the Bible passes over the first years of his life in silence. The only record we have is, that in company with his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and his father Terah, he left Ur of the Chaldees and settled in Mesopotamia; and there Terah died. Here in Haran, Abram became the head of the family, the master of a large household, and a man of great wealth.

No note is taken of the time spent in Haran[c]—only the call of the Almighty for Abram to leave all, that he may inherit the promise. God's call always has a purpose. Here it was that He might raise up a peculiar people—their life, a religion; their history, a revelation; their end, the realization of righteousness through the perfect appearing of God in Christ Jesus. And so, along with the call goes the promise that he should become the founder of a great nation; and that through him all the families of the earth should be blessed. Accompa-

nied by Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, Abram gathered together all his substance and journeyed westward toward the Promised Land. He crossed "the great river, the river Euphrates"—on and on, till the Jordan was reached; then crossing it a few miles south of the Sea of Galilee, he climbed the opposite slopes and halted in the heart of Canaan.[d]

This land was admirably suited to its purpose. It was the very center of the ancient world, with Europe, Asia, and Africa stretching all about it. It was fenced off from other lands, the desert rolling to the east and the sea spreading out to the west. It was sufficiently fertile to support a toiling population—not yielding enough to encourage prodigality nor too much to make them forget God. But "the Canaanite was in the land." These Canaanites worshipped many gods; Abram worshipped the only true and living God. His life, therefore, was separated from theirs by a distinct line.

The first place where Abram halted was Sichem—a beautiful valley lying between the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim. Here, beside the famous "oak," he pitched his tent; and here he built an altar unto the Lord. Freely passing through the land, Abram pitched his tent near Bethel; and there he built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord. And now, there was a grievous famine and Abram was driven into Egypt—that land of repeated refuge. But here a new danger threatened him. Sarai was a beautiful woman; and should some powerful prince desire her as his wife, Abram might be put to death for her sake. Forgetting, for the moment, the promise of God, and relying upon his own resources, Abram feigned that Sarai was his sister. The result was, in part, as anticipated. The

Egyptians were struck with Sarai's beauty, the news was carried to the king, and Sarai was conducted to the palace. But God interfered with the king's purpose. A grievous sickness fell upon him and his household, and the deceit of Abram was exposed. So Abram was rebuked for his double-dealing, Sarai was restored to him, and he was sent forth in peace.

On Abram's return to Canaan, he brought with him new stores of wealth, together with an increased following of servants. Advancing northward, he came to his old tenting-ground between Bethel and Ai, where stood the altar which he had erected on his first pilgrimage. And there, painfully conscious of his lapse of faith and deeply grateful for the delivering mercy of God, he once more called upon the name of the Lord. But his very prosperity was a source of new trial. Trouble grew up between his herdmen and those of Lot; and to settle the difficulty, Abram gave Lot the choice of the land. The view commanded the whole country, and Lot chose the well-watered plain in the direction of Sodom. But the people of Sodom were exceedingly wicked.

Nothing was left to Abram except the bleak uplands of Judea. Still he had what was better—even the presence and promise of God; for now the Lord assures him that he shall have the whole land for his inheritance and that his posterity shall be countless as the dust of the earth. Acting upon God's promise, Abram went up and down the country, till at last he found a halting-place in the plain of Mamre; and there, for the third time, he built an altar unto the Lord. And now the king of Elam with his allies made war upon the cities of the plain. In the battle which followed—the first recorded in the Bible—the kings of the plain were

defeated; many of their army were caught in the surrounding slime-pits; while the rest escaped to the hills. Among the prisoners was Lot, whom they carried off with all his substance. Word was brought to Abram, and he at once armed his forces and set out in pursuit. Overtaking the enemy at the northern border of Canaan, he fell upon the allied host by night, put them to rout, and pursued them beyond Damascus. He rescued Lot and brought back the spoils with all the prisoners of war.

On his return, Abram was met by the king of Sodom, who proposed to reward him for his service. But Abram refused to take anything, lest the king should afterwards make the boast, "I have made Abram rich!" Then Melchizedek, king of Salem, came forth to meet him, bringing bread and wine. This mysterious man blessed Abram in the name of "the most High God," and also gave thanks to God for the victory. And Abram gave him a tenth part of all the spoil. A thousand years pass by, and the Psalmist speaks of the Messiah as "a priest after the order of Melchizedek." Another thousand years come and go, and the Epistle to the Hebrews sustains the words of the Psalmist and represents this king of Salem as the type of the Christ.

All these years, Abram had longed for an heir to inherit the promise. And in answer to his longing, the Lord said, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Then the longing of his heart burst upon his lips, "Lord God, I go childless!" And then followed that sublime moment when Abram gazed upon the countless stars and was comforted with the assurance, "So shall thy seed be!" This was followed by an impressive ceremony—a

visible pledge of God's covenant. The sacrifices were offered and arranged according to God's appointment. And now, Abram sat over against the consecrated pieces and drove away the vultures that sought them as their prey. And as the sun was going down, a deep sleep overcame him and a horror of darkness fell upon him. And the Lord revealed to him, in a vision, the captivity of Israel in Egypt and his own departure in peace. The vision being ended, Abram awoke. The sun had set; the symbols of the covenant still lay before him; and the glory of the Lord appeared in "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp;" while the dark column with its glowing light passed down between the severed parts in token that the Lord would assuredly keep His covenant.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PROMISE TO ABRAM FULFILLED.

The Birth of Ishmael [1]—The New Covenant [2]—The Angel Visitants [3]—The Plea for Sodom [4]—The Escape of Lot [5]—Abraham and Abimelech [6]—The Birth of Isaac [7]—The Offering of Isaac [8]—The Patriarch's Death.[9]

AS in Egypt, so in Canaan, Abram tried to anticipate the promise of God. That promise was now plain; and to insure its fulfillment, Sarai suggested that Abram take her hand-maid as his slave-wife: should she bear him a son, then Abram would have a natural heir. So Abram took Hagar, an Egyptian, to wife. But Hagar soon grew insolent toward her mistress; and Sarai, bitter toward her maid. And so harsh was her treatment of the slave-wife, that Hagar fled into the wilderness. But God checked her in her flight and sent her back with a blessed promise—even the birth of

a son whose seed could not be numbered for multitude. So Hagar returned and brought forth a son; and Abram named him Ishmael.

When Ishmael was thirteen years old, the Lord came to Abram with a new name, The Almighty God—the one able to do all He promises. This was followed by the demand, "Walk before Me and be thou perfect!" And in recognition of God's Almightiness, Abram fell on his face while God talked with him. The great destiny to which God had called him was now more fully revealed. Henceforth, he should not be called Abram, "Exalted Father;" but ABRAHAM, "Father of a Multitude." So, too, Abraham's wife should no longer be known as Sarai, "The contentious;" but SARAH, "A princess!" And now, God made a new covenant and appointed the rite of Circumcision as its visible seal—a sign made in man's flesh to be a lasting mark of man's devotedness to the service of God. Then came the specific promise that Sarah should bear Abraham a son whom he should call Isaac; and as for Ishmael, he should become a great nation.

One day, as Abraham sat in his tent-door, three men approached and, according to eastern custom, stood silently before him. On seeing them, Abraham arose, bowed himself to the earth, and offered them the hospitality of his home—a little water, a morsel of bread, and the cooling shade of the tree; and as they ate, he stood by in simple courtesy and ministered to their wants. Then came the announcement from one of the heavenly visitants—for such they were—that Sarah should surely have a son; and when she laughed with incredulity at such a prospect, the Lord rebuked her because she had thus lightly treated His promise.

After the meal, the men arose to go. They had come to Abraham with blessing; they must now hasten on an errand of judgment. The divine purpose with respect to Sodom being disclosed, Abraham stood before the Lord and plead for the cities of the plain. His plea was not one of self-interest, but of tender pity: not an appeal to God's compassion, but to God's justice. And so, step by step he drew nearer to God, little by little he narrowed the number, till he rested with one bold request, "If there be ten!" And the Lord said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten!" His plea was ended; the Lord went His way; and Abraham returned to his tent.

The two angels proceeded to Sodom [a] and found Lot seated in the gateway. At their approach, Lot rose to greet them, bowing with his face to the earth and inviting them to his home. But the wicked men of Sodom, in utter shamelessness, surrounded Lot's house and demanded that the strangers be given up. And when Lot remonstrated, their fury turned into violence, at which the angels drew Lot within the door and struck the maddened mob with blindness. And now, as the angels hurried Lot and his family forth, the wrath of God fell upon the wicked cities, and fire and brimstone from the skies utterly consumed them. Meantime, Lot escaped to Zoar; but his wife, looking back contrary to God's command, was turned into a pillar of salt. The once fertile plain, thereupon, became a perpetual desolation—the type of God's wrath against sin.

Shortly after this, Abraham left the plain of Mamre [b] and moved into the country south of Hebron, halting at a town called Gerar, where dwelt their king Abimelech. Once more Abraham feigned that Sarah was his sister;

and the king sent for her, intending to make her his wife. Once more, God interfered and shielded Abraham from his folly, by warning Abimelech in a dream that he was but a dead man because the woman he had taken was another man's wife; and then commanded him, on pain of death, to restore Sarah to her husband. When the king arose from his dream, he summoned Abraham and reproved him for his deception. Then he restored Sarah, enriched Abraham with many presents, and told him he might choose any part of the land as his dwelling-place. In answer to Abraham's prayer, the plague which rested upon the king's household was removed; and Abraham withdrew to the neighborhood of Beer-sheba.[c]

At length, when Abraham was a hundred years old, the oft-repeated promise was fulfilled; for Isaac was born —his very name a token of joy. The affection of the Patriarch was speedily transferred to the child of his old age, while the insulting mockery of Ishmael furnished the occasion for Sarah to insist that Hager and her son be driven from the home. As Abraham wavered, God told him to yield to Sarah's demand, assuring him of His divine protection. And so, with a little supply of food and water, Hager and Ishmael went away. The child, however, soon became exhausted, and in her despair, the slave-mother laid him beneath the desert bushes to die; but God heard the cry of the lad and sent His angel to bid Hager rise and lift him up. Opening her eyes, she beheld a spring of water and filling the bottle, gave the lad drink. Refreshed and encouraged by the unexpected deliverance, they continued their wanderings. At last, Ishmael settled in the district south of Canaan, and there

became the founder of a people from whom are descended the Arab tribes of to-day.

After making a treaty with Abimelech, the supreme trial came to Abraham's life—the voice of God calling him to take his son, his only son Isaac, and go into the land of Moriah and there offer him up for a burnt-offering. This meant more than the mere giving up of his son—it meant the surrender of the pledge and possibility of all that God had promised him! But Abraham obeyed implicitly. As they drew near the appointed place, he left his serving-men behind, while he and Isaac went forward to make the required sacrifice The place, at length was reached; Isaac was bound and laid upon the altar; and Abraham stretched forth his hand to slay him. Then The Voice called out, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad; for now I know that thou fearest God!" And Abraham looked and saw a ram caught in a thicket; and he took the ram and offered it in the place of Isaac. In all the history of God's people, this act of Abraham is the most sublime—excelled only by that act of God Himself, who "spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all."

Full twenty years pass by before we have a new record. Meantime, Abraham had left Beersheba and returned to his old tenting-ground near Hebron. And now, at the age of a hundred and twenty-seven years, Sarah died. And Abraham purchased a field in the neighborhood of Hebron, in which was a cave; and there he laid her body to rest. The rounding-out event of Abraham's life now took place—the marriage of Isaac; and nothing stood between him and the grave. And so, at the good old age of a hundred and seventy-five—"an old man and full of years," he died. Again the Cave of

Machpelah opened to receive its silent guest, and Isaac and Ishmael laid the body of their father to rest beside the crumbling clay of his beloved Sarah. Mere titles are vain; but the grandest ever bestowed upon mortal man —till the advent of God's own Son in the flesh—was accorded to Abraham, THE FRIEND OF GOD!

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LIFE OF ISAAC.

A Quiet Life[1]—Its Early Incidents[2]—Choosing His Wife[3]—The Mission to Mesopotamia[4]—Rebecca at the Well[5]—The Marriage[6]—Esau and Jacob[7]—Isaac's Closing Days.[8]

THE greatness of the father often overshadows the life of the son. It was so with the family of Abraham. The patriarch had spent a wandering life—each new turn, a great testing-point to his faith. All interest centers upon him until the day that the Cave of Machpelah shuts in his mortal part. Then, for the first time, Isaac becomes a real character in history. His name is significant—"laughter" it means; and surely he was the crowning joy of his aged parents! And his life—so different from that of his father; a quiet, pastoral life, with little change and nothing novel about it; a life of seed-sowing which was destined to spring up into marvellous action, with the ripening of a new generation. But his own was a life of plain prose.

The only recorded incident of his infancy is that his father Abraham circumcised him when he was eight days old. Then came that festal day when the child was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast at which

the luckless Ishmael mocked and was sent forth for his folly to brave life in the wilderness. Following this was the command of God to Abraham to take his only son Isaac and offer him for a burnt-offering. And last of all, he joined Ishmael in performing the last sad rites at the tomb of their common father. But in all this, he had been little more than a witness—so little of real active agency entering into his life. His career throughout was but a passive thing—largely one of simple adjustment to surroundings; and yet, like a city set on a hill, his life could not be hid!

There is but a single intervening event which plays an important part in Isaac's life—his marriage. And for this, the death of Sarah in no small degree prepared the way. To provide a wife for his son, was the duty of an eastern father. In the case of Isaac, two things controlled the father's choice. His wife must not come from any of the neighboring tribes of Canaanites; she must come from the Hebrew race—the chosen of God—those to whom the promise pertained. She must, therefore, be one of Abraham's own kin. When Abram left Ur of the Chaldees, his brother, Nahor, did not join him in his western pilgrimage. Some time after, however, he left Chaldea and settled in Mesopotamia; and from his house Abraham resolved to seek a wife for his son.

In furtherance of his plans, Abraham summoned Eliezer—he "that ruled over all that he had;" and made him solemnly swear that he would not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, but rather go to his own country and his own kindred, and there choose him a wife. So Eliezer took a train of ten camels—as became the station of his master, and journeyed into Mesopotamia. Outside the city of Nahor was

a well, at which he arrived toward evening. Here he halted and in his perplexity prayed that the God of Abraham would show him kindness and speed his mission, giving him a sign that he might know the maiden who was appointed to be the wife of Isaac—ready to help, thoughtful to anticipate, kindly toward dumb creatures --not an arbitrary sign, but an evidence of character—qualities such as constituted the chief virtues of a pastoral life.

Scarcely was the prayer finished, when Rebecca, the granddaughter of Nahor, came to draw water. Attracted by her virgin beauty, Eliezer at once resolved to apply the chosen test. Accordingly he ran to meet her as she came up from the well—her filled pitcher on her shoulder—and begged her to give him a little water to drink. She quickly lowered the pitcher, gave the stranger drink, and looking at the long train of camels, hastened to fill the trough that they, too, might quench their thirst. The man stood and looked on in silent wonder; surely the Lord had prospered his journey! So when the task was ended, he took golden ornaments from his store of gifts and presented them to Rebecca. And he asked, "Whose daughter art thou? Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" Her answer was the guarantee that his mission had met with success. God had, indeed, guided him: the woman suited by birth and training to be Isaac's wife, was found!

Rebecca now hastened home to tell them of Eliezer's coming; and her brother Laban went out to meet him with all the formalities of oriental greeting. The purpose of the visit was at once made known, the guiding hand of God was acknowledged, and Rebecca was sent away with costly gifts and countless blessings. As

they drew near their journey's end, Isaac was seen in the distance. At that time he dwelt in the south country, but had come up to await the outcome of Eliezer's mission. And now, at the approach of eventide, he had gone out in the field to meditate, when the returning camels warned him of his servant's arrival. Rebecca saw him and inquired who he was. Being told it was their master, she veiled herself, according to custom, and lighted from the camel to meet Isaac. So Isaac led her to his mother's tent and she became his wife. And Isaac loved her and was comforted after his mother's death.

Twenty years passed by—quiet, peaceful years. Isaac has now reached the age of sixty; and two sons are born to him—Esau and Jacob. Esau grew up a man of the field; but Jacob dwelt in tents. Jacob was favored of his mother; but Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison. As the first-born, Esau held the birthright; but Jacob took advantage of his brother's infirmity and bought the birthright for a mess of pottage. A famine now spread over the land; but the Lord warned Isaac not to go into Egypt, but to that part of the country which He should show him. So Isaac went to Gerar, where dwelt Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Here he ventured the same deceit that his father had practiced, and claimed that Rebecca was his sister. The deception, however, was exposed and the patriarch suffered a sharp rebuke. At length, he became so great in the land, that the king urged him to depart; for he had become mightier than Abimelech. Repeated strife between his herdmen and those of Gerar[a] led him to withdraw, and he settled in the neighborhood of Beersheba. Here the Lord appeared to him by night and blessed him; and

Isaac built an altar there. The king of the Philistines now visited him, and they made a covenant of peace.

Isaac had now reached a good old age; his eyes were dimmed so that he could no longer see; his life-work was done; and now nothing remained but to pronounce a blessing upon his eldest son—the rightful heir. So he called Esau, and sent him out into the field with bow and quiver that he might bring him savory meat and receive the patriarchal blessing. Then followed the device of Rebecca, by which her favorite son deceived the father—old and trembling, and won the coveted birthright. Sad, indeed, is the picture of the deception; doubly sad the lament of Esau as he bitterly cried, "Hast thou but one blessing? bless me, even me also, O my father!" Then sending Esau away with a special blessing, the father summoned Jacob, renewed the blessing secured by subtlety, warned him against choosing a wife from among the Canaanites, and sent him away to Padan-aram to his mother's people. But in the end, there was reconciliation; for the record is that when Isaac died and was gathered unto his people, his sons, Esau and Jacob, buried him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LIFE OF JACOB.

Jacob is Sent to Padan-aram [1]—Marries Rachel and Leah [2]—Flees from His Uncle [3]—Is Overtaken [4]—Prepares to Meet Esau [5]—Wrestles with an Angel [6]—The Brothers Reconciled [7]—At the Old Tenting-ground. [8]

THE life of Jacob abounds in thrilling incident. It is a puzzling kind of life—so much in it that is noble, so much that is full of mean deceit. And yet, with all its shortcomings, one thing always stands distinctly in view—his deep reverence for the God of his fathers!

To save Jacob from the vengeance of his elder brother, Rebecca devised the plan of sending him to Padan-aram. So Isaac blessed him and sent him forth with the charge that he should not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, but rather go to Mesopotamia and choose a wife from the daughters of Laban. Early next morning, Jacob set out, staff in hand, and when night came on, he took a stone for a pillow and lay down to sleep in the open air. And as he slept, he saw a flight of stairs reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And the voice of Jehovah sounded from its summit, "I am the LORD thy GOD!" Then came the promise of the whole land to himself and his seed, and the assurance of the divine presence in his journey. When Jacob awoke, he exclaimed, "How holy is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Then he made a solemn vow unto the Lord, in witness of which he set up

his stone-pillow as a memorial of God's presence and a pledge of his covenant with God. And he called the place Bethel—House of God!

At length, Jacob reached the town of Haran,[a] the home of his uncle Laban. At its outskirts, was the well where Rebecca, one hundred years before, had met the servant of Abraham. Here were gathered the neighboring shepherds, from whom Jacob learned that his uncle lived near by, whose daughter Rachel was just approaching with her father's flocks. Having helped her with her task and greeted her as his kinsman, he was welcomed to the home of Laban, where, in a few days, he engaged to serve seven years, at the end of which time he was to receive Rachel as his wife. When the time had expired, he claimed his reward; but, instead, Laban gave him his eldest daughter Leah—an imposition that could easily be practiced; for, in the East, the bride is so closely veiled that no one can see her face. When Jacob discovered the artifice, he took his uncle to task for his treachery; but Laban excused himself on the ground that it would be improper for the younger to marry before the elder. However, as soon as the marriage festivities were ended, he gave him Rachel in consideration of another seven years' service. During these years, eleven sons and one daughter were born to Jacob—the youngest of whom was Joseph—as yet, the only child of the beloved Rachel.

Soon after the birth of Joseph, the time of Jacob's service expired and he began to look longingly toward the land of his fathers. So he went to Laban and asked him to dismiss him, with his wives and children. But Laban had grown rich through God's blessing upon Jacob's labor, and therefore wished to keep him in his service

Accordingly, he prevailed upon Jacob to remain with him, in return for which he would give him a certain part of the increase of his flocks. Meeting artifice by artifice—a thing which shows the defective morals of the East—Jacob's share in the flocks and herds was greatly increased, while Laban suffered loss. This led to feelings of envy and words of sharp dispute, and Jacob decided to withdraw from his uncle's service. He had spent twenty years in hard toil—fourteen for his wives and six for his substance—and gathering together his household, with all his cattle, he turned his face toward his native home. Crossing the Euphrates, he struck straight across the desert toward Damascus, and gained the mountains of Gilead,[b] which range east of the Jordan and form the boundary between Palestine and the Assyrian desert.

As soon as Laban heard of Jacob's flight, he called together his kindred and set out in pursuit, his anger being greatly increased because his household gods had been stolen. Having overtaken them, Laban bitterly complained that his son-in-law had not only fled in secret, but had also carried off his idols. Jacob, ignorant of Rachel's act, resented the charge and declared that with whomsoever his images should be found that one should be put to death. Tent after tent was searched; but by the cunning device of Rachel, they were not discovered. Then Jacob upbraided Laban for all the hardships that he had endured; but finally, as Laban had been warned by God not to do Jacob any harm, the interview ended in peace. Before parting, they set up a pillar of stone as a memorial of their meeting and a pledge that they would not pass that line for each other's hurt; and Jacob once more turned his face toward his father's house. To prepare him for the dangers still awaiting

him, there appeared before him a troop of angels—"the host of God," sent to guard him, forming a camp beside his own.

But now a new danger confronted him. Esau had become a mighty prince in the land of Edom; and Jacob was afraid that he still nursed his wrath and would surely seek revenge. So he sent a message to him, in order to allay his anger and, if possible, regain his good will. In reply, Esau set out to meet him with four hundred armed men. Interpreting this as a hostile movement, Jacob was filled with fear. His company was too small to cope with his powerful brother; his baggage was too great to escape him by flight. So he divided his people into two bands; if the one were taken, the other might escape. And then he turned to God in prayer—the first prayer on record. From prayer, he turned to prudent action and sent present after present in advance, in order to win his brother's heart. Then he rested for the night.

Rising next morning long before the break of day, Jacob sent his wives and children across the Jabbok while he tarried behind to prepare himself, no doubt again by prayer, for the trial of the day. It was here that he was met by an angel, which was none other than the Angel of Jehovah, with whom he wrestled till the dawn—a prayer in act, closing with that strong supplication, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me!" And now he receives a new name, ISRAEL—a prince of God—a sign that as he had prevailed with God, so he should prevail with man. And he called the place Peniel—the Face of God—for he had seen God face to face, and his life was preserved. But he was also taught his own frailty, for the angel touched his thigh and it

was immediately put out of joint, so that he ever after walked with halting step.

Scarcely had Jacob overtaken his company, when Esau and his four hundred followers came in sight. Alarmed at their hostile appearance, Jacob quickly divided his people into three bands, placing his slave-wives and their children first, then Leah and her children, and last of all Rachel and Joseph, while he himself led the van. As he advanced, he bowed himself to the earth seven times in humble obeisance; but Esau ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Hate had yielded to love; revenge, to pity: it was a baptism of tears! The interview ended, Esau returned to Mount Seir—the founder of the tribe of Edomites. Jacob continued his journey westward, crossed the Jordan, and arrived at Shechem, where he purchased a piece of land. Here he pitched his tent and built an altar. And here he dug that well at which, centuries after, the Son of Man sat and taught the woman of Samaria.

Becoming involved in difficulty with the Shechemites, Jacob left the neighborhood and by the command of God returned to Bethel. There he fulfilled the vow he had made when he fled from the face of Esau, and built an altar unto the Lord. And there Deborah died and was buried beneath "the oak of weeping." As he journeyed southward, just within sight of Ephratah[c]—afterward Bethlehem—Benjamin was born: and there the beloved Rachel died. Marking her grave by a pillar, Jacob finally reached the old camping-ground of his father Isaac, at Mamre near Hebron. Here Isaac died and was buried: here Jacob lived till the going down into Egypt: and here, at last, he was buried in the Cave of Machpelah.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

The Favorite Son[1]—His Dreams[2]—Sold as a Slave[3]—Thrust into Prison[4]—The Dreams of the Chief Butler and Baker[5]—The King's Dreams[6]—Joseph's Exaltation.[7]

IN Abraham, we had an instance of the greatness of the father over-shadowing the life of the son; but now the order is reversed, for we almost lose sight of Jacob in the multitude of thrilling events that cluster about his favorite child.

The life of Joseph is justly regarded as the most charming in all history. The eldest and for many years the only son of Rachel, he was the pride of his father's heart—now doubly dear to him since the mother's death. As a mark of special favor, Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colors; while Joseph unwisely showed his appreciation of his father's preference, by acting as informer against his brethren. As a result, his brethren envied him; looked upon him as a spy; and treated him with contempt—in short, they "hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him."

Joseph had two remarkable dreams. In the one, he dreamed that he and his brethren were in the field binding sheaves, and his sheaf arose and stood upright; while their sheaves bowed down to his. This not only prefigured his superiority over them: it was a type of that scene in Egypt when they prostrated themselves at his feet. To his brethren, however, it was but an exhibi-

tion of pride and increased their hatred toward him. In the other dream, the sun and moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him. Its import was largely the same as the first; but included his parents as well as his brethren. His father reproved him for repeating these ill-tokened dreams; while his brethren but hated him the more. All that was needed was the opportunity for their hate to shape itself into action. The opportunity soon came.

Jacob was at Hebron with his aged father; his sons kept their flocks and herds, moving from place to place to secure good grazing-ground; while Joseph carried messages from the home to the field. They had taken their flocks to their pasture-lands near Shechem[a]—a distance of about sixty miles; but Jacob feared violence from that quarter because of the early difficulty with the Shechemites. So he sent Joseph to see how it fared with his brethren; but when he reached the place, he learned that they had gone to Dothan. As he drew near, bearing his father's message, the very sight of him stirred up their hatred anew and they at once planned to put the dreamer to death. Reuben, however, prevailed upon them to cast Joseph into an empty pit, his purpose being to restore him secretly to his father. So they stripped him of his coat of many colors and lowered him to its depths, after which they sat down to eat bread. Just then, a caravan of traders came by, passing from Mount Gilead to Egypt, with spices from the Syrian desert, and Judah, shrinking from the guilt of shedding his brother's blood, suggested that they sell Joseph to them. So they drew him up from the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver—the type of the selling of the Son of Man. Then they killed a kid, dipped the coat of many colors

in its blood and took it to their father, telling him that they had found it in the field, and asked him whether it was his son's coat or not. Recognizing it as the coat of Joseph, Jacob's grief knew no bounds: he rent his clothes, put on sack-cloth, and refused to be comforted.

Joseph was carried down into Egypt[b] and there sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard —in short, the man was the chief of the king's executioners. Joseph was now seventeen years of age. Little by little, he won his way into favor, until he was made chief manager of Potiphar's household. Each new success, however, brought its new temptation; but he stood steadfast in thought and act: and when the supreme test of his life came, he raised the appeal, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" This test came through his master's wife. Allured by his beauty, she tried to draw him from the path of virtue; and when she failed in her wicked purpose, her evil passions put on the form of revenge, and so cunningly did she frame her charge against the innocent youth that Potiphar thrust him into prison. Here again his superior character asserted itself and won its reward; for, in time, the keeper gave him entire charge of those in his custody: Jehovah was with him; and whatever he did, Jehovah made it to prosper.

There was a conspiracy at the king's court, which involved the chief of the cup-bearers and the chief of the cooks. Upon its discovery, these two men were cast into prison and there committed to the charge of Joseph. One morning Joseph found them both very sad. Upon inquiring into the cause, he learned that they each had a dream; but as they were in prison, they could get no one to interpret it. In reply Joseph assured them that

interpretations belong to God; and then he told them the meaning of their dreams—the cup-bearer would be restored to his place, but the chief baker would be put to death. And then Joseph turned with pitiful pleading to the chief butler and said, "Think of me when it is well with thee, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house; for I was indeed stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon." But when the cup-bearer was restored, he forgot Joseph and made no effort to bring him out of his unmerited imprisonment. But God was with him: He did not forget him.

Two years pass by, and Joseph is still in the dungeon. And now Pharaoh has a dream which breaks in upon his peace; for no one in all Egypt could interpret it. Then the chief cup-bearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh; and Joseph was brought out of the prison and set before the king. The king then related to him his dream of the seven fat kine and the seven lean kine; the seven full ears and the seven thin ears. In answer, Joseph first of all gave God the glory by ascribing the power of interpretation to Him, and assured the king that God should give him the answer of peace. Then he showed the king how the dreams were the same, each representing seven years of plenty to be followed by seven years of famine; and the famine would be so great that it would consume all the abundance of the land. In addition, Joseph outlined a plan of gathering up grain during the years of plenty; so that when the famine came, there would be enough in store for all the people.

The interpretation not only satisfied the king; but it

was an evidence to him that the only man who could show him the meaning of his dreams would be the best man to make wise provision against the want which they prefigured. So he said, "Can there be found such an one as this is—a man in whom is the spirit of God?" The king, therefore appointed Joseph as deputy over the whole land of Egypt, and gave him his signet as a mark of royal authority. He clothed him in fine linen, put a golden chain about his neck, and had him ride in the chariot second only to his own. Heralds were sent before to announce his approach, and as he passed along the streets, the people prostrated themselves before him. The king also honored him with a new name, and gave him to wife the daughter of the prince of On.[b] During the years of plenty, she bore him two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, whose descendants were treated as distinct tribes when the promised land was portioned out to the sons of Jacob. Joseph was thirty years old when he thus stood before Pharaoh.

CHAPTER XXIX.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Joseph in Office [1]—System of Support [2]—His Brethren before Egypt's Lord [3]—Their Return with Benjamin [4]—The Reconciliation [5]—Jacob in Egypt [6]—Blessing the Sons of Joseph [7]—The last Patriarchal Blessing [8]—Joseph's Death.[9]

JOSEPH at once entered upon the duties of his high office. He put a tax upon the people in the form of a double tithe, and made the chief city of each district a center of storage. Then he appointed officers to gather the corn into the national granaries.

When the years of famine came, the same wise system controlled the distribution as had marked the collection. The demands upon the public supplies came not only from Egypt, but from all the neighboring countries, including the land of Canaan. At the end of two years the private stores of the people, as well as their money, were exhausted. Then they gave up their cattle, and finally all their property, they themselves being removed from the country into the city. They continued, however, to cultivate their lands as tenants under the crown, paying as rent a fifth of the product of the soil. This became an established law, the land of the priests alone being free from such taxation.

Among those who suffered from the famine was the household of Jacob. And so, when their corn was exhausted, he sent his sons into Egypt to secure a supply, keeping back Benjamin lest some evil should befall him. On their arrival they applied to Joseph for an order to procure grain, bowing low in his presence, in deference

to his dignified station, thus fulfilling their brother's dream. Joseph recognized them at once, spoke harshly to them, charged them with being spies, and cast them into prison. On the third day he released them; but retained Simeon as a pledge that they would return and bring their youngest brother with them. Then he ordered their sacks to be filled with corn, each man's money being secretly replaced in his sack, and dismissed them with the stern demand that they should not return without their brother Benjamin.

The rude treatment of Joseph, the retention of Simeon, the discovery of their money in their sacks—all pointed to one thing: Their sin had found them out! The report which they brought to their aged father was a new grief to his heart; and in his anguish he cried, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take away Benjamin!" Touching, indeed, is the scene when the patriarch pleads for his beloved child; but the decree had gone forth, "Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you;" and when their corn was exhausted, nothing remained but to take Benjamin and return to Egypt. Then Jacob prepared presents for Egypt's lord, and sent his sons with a double supply of money. On their arrival, Joseph made them a feast, arranging them according to their age; but he showed special favor to Benjamin. So they ate and drank and were merry together.

Early next morning they started for home; but they had not advanced far before they were overtaken by Joseph's steward, who charged them with stealing his master's drinking-cup—for, by Joseph's order, it had been secretly put in the mouth of Benjamin's sack.

The men resented the charge, adding that the one with whom the cup was found should be put to death and the rest become his master's bondmen. So the search began, from the eldest to the youngest ; and lo, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they all returned to the city, prostrated themselves before Joseph, and plead for the life of their brother. Finally, when they were brought to the stage of utter despair, Joseph revealed himself to them, received them with all the tender affection of a brother, and told them to hasten home and bring their father with all their substance into Egypt ; for there still remained five years of the famine. Following the king's suggestion, Joseph sent wagons laden with provisions into Canaan, with which to bring Jacob and his household ; while he gave his brethren this significant counsel, " See that ye fall not out by the way."

As they entered Egypt, Joseph went out to meet them as far as Goshen. Here they encamped, while Joseph took five of his brethren and presented them to the king. As they were a race of shepherds—and shepherd life was an abomination to the Egyptians—the king gave them the district of Goshen, the finest pasture-ground in all the land. Then Joseph brought his father and presented him to Pharaoh ; and as they stood together—the prince of God and the king of Egypt—Jacob blessed Pharaoh. When the king inquired his age, the patriarch replied, " The days of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years : few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."

There is now an intertwining of family history.

Jacob spent his remaining years—seventeen in all—in peace and plenty. As the time of his departure drew nigh, he sent for Joseph and made him solemnly swear that he would not bury him in Egypt, but carry him up to the burying-place of his fathers. Soon after this, Joseph received a message that his father was sick ; and hastened with his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to his bedside. The arrival of Joseph revived the aged patriarch, and he sat up and blessed him and his sons—the latter in these significant words, "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who fed me all my life long unto this day, the ANGEL who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads!" He also gave Joseph the prophetic assurance that God should bring him again into the land of his fathers.

And now, Jacob gathers his sons about him to give them his patriarchal blessing. REUBEN, his first-born, was the beginning of his strength ; but, unstable as water, he should not excel.—SIMEON and LEVI alike had been instruments of cruelty ; so they should be scattered in Israel. To JUDAH was assigned the sceptre, even till the advent of the Saviour. ZEBULON should dwell between the Lake and the Sea and engage in commerce. ISACHAR, in the midst of his plenty, should yield to indolence and become a prey to foreign tribes. DAN should be a judge among the people, and a serpent in the way, an adder in the path of invaders. GAD should be repeatedly plundered, but should triumph in the end. ASHER would gather the dainties of the earth ; but like all who live daintily, he would perform no great deed. NAPHTALI should spread his branches like an oak and be greatly multiplied. And now, the aged patriarch gathers up the richest blessings of earth

and heaven, and bestows them upon his favorite son JOSEPH; while BENJAMIN is described as a ravening wolf, securing its prey—yet enduring throughout the history of the chosen people. Then designating them as the heads of the tribes of Israel, and enjoining them to bury him in the Cave of Machpelah, he passed away in peace.

After the first outburst of grief, Joseph proclaimed a mourning for his father; and then, accompanied by his brethren, the elders of Israel and Egypt, and a band of soldiers, he carried the body of Jacob into Canaan and laid it to rest in the tomb of his fathers. On their return to Egypt, his brethren feared that he might now seek revenge for the evil they had brought upon him. So they sent a message to the effect that it was their father's wish that he should forgive them their sin. Joseph received them graciously, assured them of his forgiving love, and then uttered those memorable words, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." And he comforted them and spake kindly unto them. For more than fifty years, Joseph continued to rule in the land, and died at the age of one hundred and ten. But before his death, he exacted a promise from his brethren that when they were restored to the promised land, they should carry up his bones with them. "So Joseph died and all his brethren and all that generation."

CHAPTER XXX.

LIFE OF MOSES.

FROM HIS INFANCY TO THE EXODUS.

Egypt [1]—The Cruel Decree [2]—Birth of Moses [3]—Flight into Midian [4]—His Call [5]—Before Pharaoh [6]—The Plagues [7]—The Passover [8]—Leaving Egypt [9]—Crossing the Red Sea.[10]

THE land of Egypt [a] holds a remarkable place in the history of God's chosen people. After the death of Joseph, upwards of three centuries run their round before the Book of Exodus begins the story of Israel's oppression. Meantime, the sons of Jacob had grown into a mighty nation, but without a national life.

It is commonly supposed that the king "who knew not Joseph," was the first ruler of a new dynasty. Fearing the fast increasing strength of the Hebrews, he resolved to enslave them. So he set them to work under task-masters in order to break them down with heavy burdens. But instead, they grew more powerful and increased the more rapidly. A special effort at child destruction having failed, he sent out the cruel decree that every man-child of the Hebrews should be cast into the Nile.

In one of the Hebrew homes, two children—Aaron and Miriam—were born before the savage edict was passed. But at the birth of a third child—a son—the law was in full force. So the mother hid her babe for three months; but finding further concealment impossible, she put him in an ark of bulrushes and committed it to the Nile. The daughter of Pharaoh, coming down to the river-side,[b] saw the strange little boat and directed her maids

to bring it. As she opened the ark, the cry of the little outcast touched her heart and, true to her woman-nature, she resolved to save it from its doom. Then Miriam, who had been watching at a distance, came forward and proposed to get a Hebrew nurse. Hastening home, she soon returned with her mother whom the princess engaged to take the child in charge. His infant days over, the mother brought him to her mistress, who adopted him as her son and called him MOSES. Reared at court, he received the highest education Egypt could afford; until, at the age of forty, he was thoroughly versed in all its learning.

But Moses had another lesson to learn—to choose between rank among the Egyptians and slavery with his own people. And while, perhaps, he wavered, an unexpected event forced him to immediate decision. One day, he went out among his brethren and saw an Egyptian smite a Hebrew. Acting on impulse, he slew the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. Again he went out among his kinsmen, and this time he interfered with two Hebrews who were engaged in strife. But the wrong-doer turned upon him and upbraided him for killing the Egyptian. Realizing that his deed was discovered, he fled into the land of Midian[c]—the region of Sinai. In the plains of Midian was a well at which he sat down to rest; and there he protected the daughters of Jethro, the priest-prince of the land, from the rudeness of neighboring shepherds. Brought into the home of Jethro, he took to wife one of his daughters and for forty years had the care of her father's flocks. These were years of quiet preparation in the solitudes of Sinai for the great work that God had reserved for him.

One day, as he was tending the flocks, a strange sight

met his eyes—a bush burned but not consumed. And as he turned aside to view it, a voice called out to him from the bush. It was the voice of Jehovah, proclaiming Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He had heard the cry of His people and had come down to deliver them; and He would do this by the hand of Moses. Moses, however, was not ready for so great a task; but the command, with its implied promise, was, "Ye shall serve in this mountain!" Then, to meet Moses' anxious inquiry, the Lord revealed Himself as the "I AM"—the ever self-existent Jehovah. But still he hesitated, and to overcome his scruples, the Lord gave him three signs, marvellous as they were significant. Still wavering, the anger of the Lord was kindled against him and He gave him his brother Aaron as his mouthpiece.

As Moses set forth, God encouraged his heart by telling him that they were dead who had sought his life. And now, on the way to Egypt, he was met by an angel with a flaming sword, who threatened him with death because he had not circumcised his youngest son. This seal of the covenant having been executed, he again took up his journey toward Egypt. At God's command, Aaron had gone forth to meet him, and together they entered Egypt and assembled the elders of the people. Then they went before Pharaoh and asked that they might go a three days' journey into the wilderness and there sacrifice to their God. But the sacrifice of animals was an offence to the Egyptians, whose peculiar idolatry was animal-worship. So Pharaoh was enraged at the bold request and, in reply, put new burdens upon the people. In their distress, the under-officers appealed to the king; but he told them that it was their idleness that led them

to think of sacrifice. As they came from the presence of Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron and bitterly upbraided them as the cause of their added burdens. Then Moses cast himself before the Lord, who gave him a new revelation and commanded him to return to Pharaoh and demand the release of His people.

The king's refusal was followed by the strokes of the Almighty. Plagues were not uncommon in Egypt; but the nature and degree and circumstance of their occurrence, mark those that now fall upon the land as quite distinct. While showing God's good-will toward Israel, each is a direct rebuke to Egyptian idolatry. There are three groups. The first plague polluted the Nile; the next filled the land with frogs; the third covered man and beast with vermin. These fell alike on Hebrew and Egyptian. The second group affected only the Egyptians. First came the plague of poisonous insects; then, the destruction of the cattle; while the third touched their person in the plague of sores. And now, without a note of warning, comes the last group—the hail-storm, the scourge of locusts, the thick darkness. Yet Pharaoh hardened his heart. Then came that final stroke which fell like a funeral pall; for the destroying angel brooded over every home and all the first-born of Egypt lay dead. Then Pharaoh and his people rose up and thrust out the Israelites; so Israel went forth free.

To save His people from a like destruction, God had directed them to take a lamb or kid and sprinkle its blood upon the door-posts. Seeing this blood, the destroying angel, as he went forth to smite the Egyptians, would pass over the homes of the Israelites—he would not enter a house saved by blood! Then the family was to eat the sacrificial meal, with loins girded

and shoes on their feet and a staff in the hand, ready to quit the land of bondage.[d] This remained an institution throughout all the generation of the Jews, having its consummation when Christ our Passover was slain for us.

It was 430 years, to a day, since Jacob had entered Egypt—seventy souls in all; and now they went forth a great nation—600,000 men, besides women and children. Of this vast multitude, Moses became the mighty leader. They did not go in a direct line toward Palestine;[e] but circling north, turned downward in the direction of the Red Sea. On their journey, they were blessed with a wonderful presence—a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. Meantime, Pharaoh repented that he had let them go; and speedily preparing his men of war, he set forth in swift pursuit. It was impossible to escape. Mountains shut them in on the south and west; the sea spread out to the east; and Pharaoh with his host was advancing from the north.

The people were terror-stricken and turned upon Moses with bitter upbraidings. But God had not forsaken him; and in answer to His command, Moses stretched out the rod over the sea, the waters gradually parted, and the hosts of Israel passed over on dry ground. And when the pillar which had been light to the Israelites but dense darkness to the Egyptians was removed, Pharaoh madly followed; but becoming entangled in the bed of the sea, his horsemen turned and fled. Too late! The children of Israel had safely reached the other shore; the rod of Moses once more waved over the dark abyss; and the waters rushed fiercely back into their channels and utterly overwhelmed the whole Egyptian host.[f] Jehovah had triumphed: His people were free!

CHAPTER XXXI.

LIFE OF MOSES.

FROM THE RED SEA TO THE BORDERS OF CANAAN.

The Waters of Marah [1]—Smiting the Rock [2]—Staying up Moses' Hands [3]—Giving the Law [4]—The Golden Calf [5]—The New Tables of Stone [6]—The People Murmur [7]—Sending out the Spies [8]—The Fiery Serpents [9]—The Last Encampment [10]—On Pisgah's Hights. [11]

THE Red Sea was now between Israel and Egypt Turning toward the wilderness they marched three days; but finding no water, they again moved forward and soon reached Marah, whose waters were so bitter they could not drink them. At God's command, Moses took the branches of a certain tree and cast them into the springs, and immediately they became sweet. A short march brought them to Elam,[a] a fertile spot with twelve springs and seventy palms. Here they tarried several days.

Between Elam and Sinai lay the desert of Sin. It was a barren waste, and the people upbraided Moses and Aaron for bringing them into the wilderness to perish. But God provided for them by sending at eventide a countless number of quails; while in the morning the face of the ground was covered with manna—henceforth their food in the desert. Then for three days they journeyed by a circuitous course to Rephidim,[b] only to find that the Amelekites had possession of the springs there. Wearied with their wanderings and faint from thirst, they turned upon Moses in wild mutiny. In his despair, he turned to God, who commanded him to smite

the rock. No sooner was this done than the water gushed out in rich abundance, and once more the people were refreshed.

The Amelekites, a hostile tribe, occupied the northern part of Sinai. As Moses was not a man of war, he put Joshua in command of his fighting forces; while he went up to the top of the mountain to watch the progress of the battle. As he stretched the rod of God over the contending hosts, Israel prevailed; but when his hands grew weary and dropped to his side, the people of Amelek prevailed. Then Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands till the going down of the sun, and the Amelekites were utterly routed. And as a memorial of their victory, Moses erected an altar and called it Jehovah-nissi—The Lord is my Banner. As they advanced toward Sinai, Jethro came out to meet them, bringing the wife and two sons of Moses. At his suggestion, Moses appointed subordinate judges who should decide the smaller matters, while all the weighty questions were brought to Moses in order that he might lay them before the Lord.

The promise, "Ye shall serve upon this mountain," was now fulfilled; for Israel at length encamped at the foot of Sinai.[c] There is something supremely sublime in the gathering of that nation there before God. They had fought their way through the wilderness; and now, having reached the appointed place, they waited in deepest awe, while Moses went up and talked with the Lord. And when he returned, with one voice they exclaimed, "All that the Lord hath commanded will we do!" This was followed by a solemn purification; and then, from the cloud-circled mount, above thunder peal and trumpet sound, the voice of God called Moses into

His presence that he might receive those Laws which were to govern the people of God in all generations.

Taking Joshua with him, Moses went up into the mountain, while Aaron and Hur were appointed to care for the people. And there he abode forty days and forty nights, receiving from the hands of God the two tables of stone. On returning to the camp, he found the people given over to idolatry. In their mad mirth, they were dancing about a golden calf. As the licentious scene burst upon his view, he dashed the tables of stone to the ground, breaking them in pieces. Then sharply rebuking Aaron, he cried, "Who is on the Lord's side? To me!" And the sons of Levi gathered about him, ready to do his bidding. At his command, they went forth to slay; and 3000 of those who had kept up the riotous mirth, fell by the sword. He next cast the golden calf into the fire; then grinding it to powder, he mingled its dust with the waters of the brook, and Israel was compelled to drink it.

As a result of Israel's apostacy, Jehovah withdrew his presence, but sent His Angel before them; while Moses moved "the tent of meeting" from the camp which they had profaned, and there received the revelations of the Almighty. Again he prepared two tables of stone; again he went into the mount; and as the cloud closed about him, the glory of God passed by. Descending once more to the people, the light of God's glory shone from his face and he was compelled to veil it while reciting to them the Law. And now the tabernacle takes the place of the tent of meeting; and Aaron and his sons are solemnly set apart for the priesthood. After the celebration of the Passover, a census was taken, revealing the strength of the people—603,500 above the age of twenty, not includ-

ing the tribe of Levi which had been sacredly set apart to take the place of the first-born.

The distance to Canaan was not more than 200 miles; but a direct course could not be taken through that mountain region, and the progress at best would be slow. Entering "the great and terrible wilderness,"[d] they soon grew disheartened; and in reply to their loud murmurings, the fire of the Lord consumed the extreme parts of their camp. Then, forgetting the hardships of Egypt, they thought only of its abundance; and though Jehovah sent a shower of quails, He smote them with a plague while the flesh was yet between their teeth. And now revolt is planned from an unexpected quarter; for Aaron and Miriam set at naught the authority of Moses. The Lord smote Miriam with leprosy, but at Moses' intercession, she was restored.

Reaching the wilderness of Paran,[e] Moses sent twelve men to search the land. After forty days they returned; but while praising the fertility of the land, they told of its walled cities and giant race. This cast a gloom over the whole camp. Joshua and Caleb assured the people that they could possess the land; but they rebelled and proposed to choose a captain who would take them back into Egypt. Then, as they were about to stone the faithful spies, the glory of the Lord suddenly appeared, and the people were saved from the wrath of Jehovah only by the earnest intercession of Moses. And then began that series of wanderings, made up of murmurings, and rebellions, and sore judgments. The sacred flame consumed Korah; the earth opened and swallowed Dathan and Abiram; Aaron was established in the priesthood; and Miriam died. Of that mighty host of

men who had left Egypt, only four were yet alive—Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb.

Israel was now at Kadesh ;[f] and at last their wanderings were to cease. The easiest way to reach the land of Canaan would be through Edom,[g] the land of Esau ; but its inhabitants refused to let them pass within their borders. Turning aside from Edom, their first march brought them to Mount Hor; and there Aaron died. From Mount Hor, they moved southward, skirting the eastern side of Mount Sier; and there on the border of that wilderness, the murmurings of the people became so great that the Lord sent fiery serpents among them. In answer to their prayer of repentance, Moses was directed to make a serpent of brass and set it up in their midst so that those who were bitten might look upon it and live.

From this point the Israelites were compelled to win their way by conquest. In a short time they gained possession of all the land east of the Jordan, and made their last encampment in the plains of Moab. It was at this juncture that Balaam uttered those wonderful prophecies which marked the rich inheritance of Israel. And here, on the very borders of the promised land, the people bowed down to idols, and a plague swept away 24,000 of them at one fell stroke.

The time of Moses' departure was drawing nigh. He longed to visit the promised land ; but God had willed it otherwise. So he bowed in humble submission to the divine decree, and, by God's appointment, chose Joshua as his successor. His work was now done. Assembling the people, he reviewed God's mercies in all their wanderings, repeated the law in fullest detail, and closed with solemn exhortations, warnings, and prophe-

cies. Then with a song upon his lips, he blessed the tribes, ascended the heights of Pisgah,[h] looked down upon their inheritance as it spread out before him, and there he closed his eyes upon the Canaan here below to open them on the glories of the Canaan above. And buried there by the hand of God, no man knows his grave.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AARON AND HIS SONS.

Aaron Meets Moses[1]—Encourages Idolatry[2]—Made High Priest[3]—The Benediction[4]—Death of Nadab and Abihu[5]—Aaron's Revolt[6]—Korah, Dathan, and Abiram[7]—Aaron's Rod[8]—His Death[9]—His Work.[10]

THE name of AARON is inseparably linked with that of Moses; but apart from his brother, he would have no place in history. The greatness of Moses is the greatness of the sun, shining by its own inherent light: the greatness of Aaron is that of the moon, borrowing its light from the sun.

When Moses and Aaron met in Midian, they talked of their new commission, with all their hopes and fears. On reaching Egypt, Aaron told the wondrous story with eloquent tongue and stirred up the elders of Israel by strong appeal; so that, though wearied with oppression and despairing of relief, they still rejoiced that the God of their fathers had not utterly forsaken them. And then, completely overwhelmed at the thought of His remembrance, "they bowed their heads and worshiped." So Aaron became the mouth of Moses, while Moses

stood between him and God. Moses was the prophet; Aaron, the priest: together, they acted as mediator between Jehovah and His people.

While Moses was on the mount, the people lapsed into gross idolatry. Week after week they had waited in deepest awe for the return of their leader; but at last their awe yielded to impatience and their impatience ran out into unrighteous action. They must have something to stand between them and the terrible glory of the mountain. So they hastened to Aaron and demanded that he make them gods to go before them. Weakly yielding to their clamor, he called for their ornaments of gold, and these he fashioned into the likeness of a calf—the symbol of the Egyptian Apis. Then he built an altar and proclaimed a solemn feast for the morrow. First came the sacrifices; then the people sat down to eat and drink; and finally they gave loose rein to their unbridled natures in idolatrous revellings—and all within sight of the awful manifestations on the mount; until Moses suddenly appeared and put an end to their wanton festivities.

The making of the tabernacle[a] marked an epoch in the history of the chosen people—calling, as it did, for a special priesthood. The necessity for such a step was shown by the apostacy of the people. Although Aaron had encouraged their idolatry, still the loyalty with which his tribe rallied about Moses and executed his commands, brought to them the priestly honors. So Aaron was constituted High-priest,[b] and the order was fixed in his posterity; while the rest of the tribe were to assist in the sacrificial service.[c] In the ceremony of consecration, Aaron and his sons were brought to the tabernacle; while all the people of Israel assembled before

the door. The priestly garments were put on Aaron; a mitre was placed on his head; then he was anointed with the oil of consecration; and to crown the whole service, the appointed sacrifices were made.

After Aaron and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, were thus set apart as priests of Israel, they entered at once upon the duties of their office. The beautiful form in which Aaron blessed the people is used as *The Benediction* at our Chief Service:—

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee:
The Lord make His face shine upon thee:
And be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee
And give thee peace!"

Then the glory of the Lord appeared and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt-offering. And when the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

The fire thus kindled was ever to be used in making sacrifice. But Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord. For this violation of God's command, the wrath of heaven was kindled against them and fire went out from Jehovah and devoured them. Aaron and his surviving sons were charged to make no signs of mourning—only the people were permitted to express their grief. And when Moses said that the Lord would be sanctified in them that come nigh Him, Aaron held his peace. It is a significant fact that, following directly upon God's summary judgment, the priests were forbidden to drink wine or strong drink before entering the tabernacle—from which it is inferred that this act of sacrilege was committed in drunken recklessness.

After the seventy elders were consecrated as helpers of Moses, Aaron and Miriam rose in sedition against their brother. They were offended at his marriage; they were envious at his popularity; they were displeased because God communicated to His people through him; they claimed equal standing with him as a prophet. Then the Lord sharply rebuked them for their haughtiness and declared His pleasure to speak with Moses face to face; but with them, by dreams and visions. And then, as a proof of His displeasure, He smote Miriam with leprosy. This led Aaron to confess his sin and entreat Moses to intercede for their sister. In answer, therefore, to Moses' prayer, her leprosy was removed; but Aaron was obliged to shut her out of the camp for seven days in order to fulfil the law touching leprosy and teach them the greatness of their guilt.

Another rebellion took place—started by Korah, one of the heads of the tribe of Levi. Jealous of Aaron's priestly power, he planned a revolt enlisting 250 princes —among them, Dathan and Abiram, chiefs of the tribe of Reuben. Korah claimed for himself full priestly rights, while Dathan and Abiram struck at the princely power of Moses. In reply to their complaint, Moses prostrated himself before the Lord; then rising from the earth, he appointed the following day for Jehovah to decide whom He would choose to minister before Him. When Korah and his followers appeared, the sacred fire burst upon them and consumed them. Then Moses warned the people to separate themselves from Dathan and Abiram; this done, the earth opened and swallowed them up with all their company. Last of all, the Lord sent a plague to sweep away those in whom was the spirit of revolt. This continued till Aaron, as God's

appointed priest, stood between the living and the dead; nor was the scourge stayed till 14,700 people had perished.

A test was now instituted which marked the special favor of the Lord toward the house of Aaron. The twelve rods, or sceptres of the twelve tribes, were laid in the tabernacle before the ark, and the name of Levi was inscribed on the one which represented the tribe of Levi. On the morrow, when Moses brought forth the rods, that of Aaron had budded and blossomed and borne fruit; but all the rest were dead and dry. This not only indicated that his was a living and fruitful sceptre; but it also prefigured "the Rod of Jesse," growing up as a tender plant—a root out of a dry ground. The priesthood of Aaron was thus settled; and the rod that budded was laid up in the ark as a witness of the will of Jehovah.

On reaching Mount Hor,[d] it was revealed to Moses that Aaron was to be gathered to his fathers. In the sight of all the congregation, Moses led him and his son Eleazar up into the mountain, and there he stripped Aaron of his priestly robes and put them on his son. But the veil of silence is drawn over the scene. No voice breaks the mountain stillness; no murmur trembles on the air; not even a word of farewell to wake an echo! He who had seen his sons stretched in death by the sharp stroke of the Almighty, now in quiet submission and with calm dignity climbs the solitary height and pillows his aged head for his long last sleep. And as Moses came down, the new High-priest wearing the old priest's robes, the whole house of Israel knew that the days of Aaron had been numbered, and they mourned for him thirty days.

So Aaron died. As the first-born of his father's house, the priesthood had been a part of his birthright. Gifted

with eloquence, he was fitted to be the mouthpiece of Moses in Egypt. In all their desert wanderings, he was strong at Moses' side; but weak and wavering when left to his own resources. He shared with Moses in all his cares, participated in all his errors, and suffered with him even in his sins—shut out alike from the promised land. Tradition has fixed his tomb, the spot to this day being marked by a Mohammedan chapel.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LIFE OF JOSHUA.

Joshua in Command[1]—Report of the Spies[2]—Crossing the Jordan[3]—Taking Jericho[4]—The Sin of Achan[5]—Downfall of Ai[6]—Bondage of Gibeon[7]—Defeating the Confederate Kings[8]—Subduing the Native Tribes[9]—Charge to the People.[10]

WHEN Moses died, he was succeeded by JOSHUA—the very name significant: the Hebrew name of Him who saved His people from their sins. And now, at the age of eighty, with forty years of slave-life which taught him how to serve and forty years of wilderness-life which taught him how to command, Joshua becomes God's chosen instrument to lead His people into the promised land.[a]

When the days of mourning for Moses were ended, the Lord appeared to Joshua and commanded him to lead the people over the Jordan. To encourage him for so great an enterprise, He assured him of victory, enjoined him to obedience, and gave him the promise of His divine presence. Joshua at once made ready to carry out the Lord's commands. About six miles west of the Jordan, opposite the camp of Israel, stood the city of Jericho. It was surrounded by massive walls, while

armed watchmen stood guard each night at its closed gates. Two spies had been sent into the city to study its strength: they escaped the officers of the king by the strategy of Rahab the harlot, who let them down from a window in the wall. In return for her kindness, she made them promise by oath that they would save her from the destruction that would come to the city. Fleeing to the mountains, they remained in hiding for three days; then they crossed the Jordan, hastened to the camp, and told Joshua that Jehovah had indeed delivered Jericho into his hands; for all the inhabitants trembled at his approach.

The next morning, Joshua broke camp and moved down to the Jordan. Here the order of march was arranged; the people were enjoined to sanctify themselves; and on the third day, by a mighty miracle, the waters were divided, and the hosts of Israel marched through the river-bed and encamped in the plains of Jericho. The Passover feast was at hand; and now the people kept it for the first time in the promised land—just forty years after its institution in Egypt. The neighboring inhabitants had fled into the cities, terrified at the news of the passage over the Jordan; and the people of Israel took possession of their rich stores. With the new supply of bread, the manna ceased. As Joshua was planning the attack upon Jericho,[b] he saw in a vision a man with a drawn sword. It was the Captain of the Lord's hosts. Falling down at his presence, Joshua worshiped Him; and there he received the promise of the capture of the city, and was shown the method of attack.

Under the leadership of Joshua, the hosts of Israel marched around the city for six consecutive days. On the seventh day, they compassed the city seven times.

At the seventh time, the priests blew a loud blast with their trumpets, the people set up a mighty shout, and as the walls fell down flat, the warriors rushed straight into the city and put its inhabitants to the sword. Not a single one was spared except Rahab and her household. And so great was the reward of her faith, that she was honored with being one of the four women, alien to Israel, whose names are immortalized by appearing in the genealogy of Jesus.

About twelve miles from Jericho, a short distance from Bethel, near the place where Abraham had pitched his tent, lay the city of Ai.[c] The place being small and poorly defended, Joshua sent a small body of men to take it; but they suffered a disgraceful defeat. Then Joshua and the elders of Israel prostrated themselves before the ark; and the Lord gave answer that Israel had sinned in taking the accursed spoil and hiding it among their goods. After sanctifying the people, he set the morrow apart for the purpose of deciding by lot who the guilty person was; and the lot fell upon Achan. The offender being convicted, he was taken with all his family and possessions to the neighboring valley—the valley of Achor—where they stoned him and his entire household to death. Then their bodies were burned with all their goods; and a great heap of stones was raised over the spot, to remind Israel of his crime and to deter them from committing a like offence.

By the command of God, a second assault was now to be made upon Ai, with the promise of success. A party of 5000 men were placed in ambush, while Joshua marched against the city with the rest of the army. The people of Ai, made reckless by their former victory, rushed upon the forces of Joshua, who feigned retreat;

meantime, the men in ambuscade rose up and set the city on fire. Then as the ascending smoke warned Joshua that his plan had carried, he suddenly renewed the attack and the pursuers, surprised by his unexpected assault, turned in flight. But seeing the smoke ascend from the city and the other division of Joshua's army already upon their rear, in their panic they could neither fight nor fly, and were all cut to pieces. The victorious army then returned to complete the destruction of the city, putting its inhabitants to the sword. The spoils, according to the command of God, were divided among the soldiers, and the city was reduced to a heap of rubbish.

The success of Joshua alarmed the kings west of the Jordan and they formed a league for his overthrow. The people of Gibeon,[d] however, foresaw the destruction that awaited them and resolved to secure by artifice what they could not gain by arms. To this end, they assumed the guise of travelers from a far-distant country and sought alliance with Israel. So Joshua made peace with them and entered into a solemn covenant that he would save their lives. Three days after, the deceit was exposed. Joshua kept his promise, but punished them by bringing them into perpetual bondage.

The confederate kings, on learning of the defection of the Gibeonites, joined forces and marched against their city. In their dire distress, they dispatched a messenger to Joshua, imploring his immediate aid. Marching all night, Joshua took the enemy by surprise and utterly routed them. In the pursuit that followed, the Canaanites were overtaken by a violent hail-storm, which destroyed more than had fallen in battle. In his zeal to blot out the enemy, and inspired by the miraculous interposition of the Almighty, Joshua cried out :

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon:
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon!"

And the sun and moon were stayed in their course until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

The confederate kings, in their flight, hid themselves in a cave. Bidding his men roll huge stones to its entrance and placing a guard there, Joshua pressed on in pursuit; nor did he make an end of slaying till the enemy was completely consumed. On his return, he brought the five kings out of the cave and hanged them on five trees till the evening. Then their bodies were taken down and cast into the cave, and great stones were piled up against the entrance. From this place, Joshua went to the southern[e] part of Canaan, storming their cities and slaying their people; and finally he returned with his victorious army to the camp at Gilgal. Then starting northward,[f] he fell upon the hosts of upper Galilee and put them to the sword; after which, he turned to the uttermost parts of Canaan and subdued all their inhabitants.

His conquests ended, Joshua now turned his attention to the division of the land.[g] After this work was finished, the people of Israel enjoyed several years of rest from their enemies. Last of all, he summoned the heads of tribes and others in authority, and reminded them of all that God had done to the Canaanites for their sakes. Then gathering the people together, he reviewed the history of the Chosen Family and closed by solemnly calling upon them to serve the Lord. Receiving, in turn, their solemn pledge that they would not forsake the God who had wrought such wonders among them, he dismissed the assembly to their homes. His life work was done; and soon after, Israel's great warrior passed away in peace.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE STORY OF RUTH.

Seasons of Sin [1]—In the Land of Moab [2]—Naomi widowed [3]—Returns with Ruth [4]—Not Naomi but Mara [5]—Ruth among the Gleaners [6]—Ruth and Boaz [7]—Boaz's Promise [8]—Boaz at City-gate [9]—Takes Ruth to Wife [10]—The Blessing. [11]

THERE is no sweeter story in all history than that of RUTH. After the death of Joshua,[a] the people kept the covenant they had renewed with him; but little by little, as that generation passed away, they fell into gross idolatry.[b] The period was one of disruption—of shocking sins and revolting crimes. And when the nation stood on the verge of anarchy, a mighty man of Israel would rise up, marshal their shattered forces, and win the most brilliant victories. It is right in the midst of these scenes of war and bloodshed, of anarchy and confusion, of deeds of sin and shame, that the pure, sweet story of Ruth is told—a fragrant flower, springing up amid tangled weeds and poisonous herbs.

The scene of this story is laid, for the most part, in Bethlehem, of Judea—a sacred spot from the days of the patriarchs. There had been a grievous famine in that land, and many of its people were constrained to seek sustenance in neighboring countries. Among these was a man named Elimelech, who, with his wife Naomi and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion journeyed into the land of Moab. Here they would enjoy peace; for Moab, at this time, was subject to Israel. Here, too, they would live in comfort; for a blessed abundance smiled round

about them. But peace and plenty cannot shut out sickness or stay the hand of death.

Some time after reaching the land of Moab, Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. Then each of the sons took a wife from the daughters of Moab: their names, Orpah and Ruth. Within a few years, both the sons died: so Naomi, bereft of husband and sons, was doubly widowed. And now, in the loneliness of her widowhood, her mind and heart went back to her old home. So she resolved to return to her native land; for she had heard that God had crowned the year with loving kindness and His people were again enjoying the fruits of the earth. Exercising her right as the head of the home, she urged her daughters-in-law to remain among their kinsfolk, saying, "Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voice and wept. And when they begged to accompany her, she again urged upon them to return; for nothing but widowhood awaited them in Judah. One more struggle and Orpah yielded and went back to her people and her gods.

Not so with Ruth. She cast in her lot with Naomi. And when Naomi drew a touching picture of her lonely life in Judah and sought to influence her by the example of Orpah, Ruth gave utterance to those words which have ever stood as an ideal of woman's fidelity and love, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

After this marvellous expression of devotion, Naomi yielded and Ruth became the companion of her journey home.

A wonderful change had come over Naomi since she left her home ten years before: ten short years, but full of care and sorrow and separation. She had gone forth, the brightness of hope beaming from her face; she came back, the seams of sorrow streaking her brow. And as her kinsfolk and acquaintances looked upon her, they were filled with amazement at the change and with one voice they exclaimed, "Is this Naomi!" And she answered, "Call me not Naomi"—pleasant—the one blessed with a pleasant life; "but call me Mara"—bitter—for bitter indeed had been the cup of sorrow which the Almighty had pressed to her lips. So Naomi once more made her home in Bethlehem; and Ruth cast in her lot with her.

It was the beginning of barley harvest when Naomi and Ruth reached Bethlehem. In order to provide for their wants, Ruth went forth as a gleaner—thus claiming the portion of the poor. There was a man of Bethlehem named Boaz, rich and powerful, and a kinsman of Naomi's deceased husband. It happened that Ruth went into this man's field to glean. In the course of the day, Boaz came into the field, and as he passed among the reapers, he met them with the greeting, "The Lord be with you!" And they answered, "The Lord bless thee!" Seeing Ruth among the gleaners, he inquired, "Whose damsel is this?" And when he was told who she was, he spoke kindly to her and told her to remain in the fields and keep company with the maidens till the harvest was past.

Then Ruth, prostrating herself, said, "Why have I

found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" In reply, Boaz praised her devotion to Naomi, and commended her for placing herself under the protecting care of the God of Israel. When the meal-time came, he invited her to share with the reapers in their simple fare; and on returning to the work of the field, he instructed his young men to drop handfuls of grain purposely, so that she might profit by their kindness. When she returned home at nightfall, she told her mother-in-law all that had happened during the day; and Naomi blessed her in the name of the Lord who had guided her to her husband's nearest kinsman, and told her to continue in his field. So Ruth kept gleaning in the field of Boaz till the end of the harvest.

When the harvest was past, Naomi told Ruth that it was the duty of Boaz, according to the Law, to take her to wife; for if a man died without children, it was required of his nearest kin to marry the widow; their first-born being counted the heir of the deceased husband, so that his name should not be blotted out. A stranger to the customs of Israel, Ruth followed the instructions of Naomi; and though a delicate task was assigned her, she performed it with such innocency of heart that Boaz exclaimed, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter!" Then he promised that he would do the part that the Law required of him as her kinsman.

It was the custom, in those days, to transact all business of importance at the city gates. This was done for two reasons: It was a common point of meeting; and since many were continually passing in and out, there were always trustworthy witnesses to every important transaction. On the following day, Boaz went up to the

gate of the city and requested ten of the elders to sit down as witnesses of what was to take place. Then summoning the near kinsman whose duty it was, according to law, to take Ruth to wife, Boaz asked him, in the presence of the elders, if he would redeem the estate and at the same time "raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." As the man declared his unwillingness to do this, it rested with Boaz to act the part of nearest kin.

The way in which this was done was strange as it was impressive. The shoe of the kinsman was taken off in the presence of the elders and the people; and Boaz then called them to witness that he had bought all that belonged to Elimelech and his sons; and had purchased Ruth to be his wife, so that the name of the dead should not be cut off from among his brethren. The elders and all the people that were at the gates answered, "We are witnesses." And then, invoking the blessing of the Lord upon them, the people went their ways, and Boaz took Ruth to wife.

And the blessing of the Lord was indeed upon them; for Ruth became the mother of Obed, whose son Jesse was the father of David. And so great David's Greater son descended in direct line from this woman of Moab who chose Israel's people as her people and Israel's God as her God.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LIVES OF THE JUDGES.

OTHNIEL, EHUD, SHAMGAR, DEBORAH AND BARAK.

Drifting into Idolatry [1]—Deliverance by Othniel [2]—Tyranny of Eglon [3]—Slain by Ehud [4]—Shamgar and the Philistines [5]—The Northern Canaanites [6]—Deborah's Prophecy [7]—Barak's Victory [8]—Sisera Slain [9]—Song of Deborah and Barak. [10]

AFTER Joshua and all the host that had crossed the Jordan had passed away, the new generation fell into idolatry; and, as is universal, they became subject to the people whose gods they served. But while they forsook God, God did not forsake them, but raised up judges who freed them from the hand of the oppressor. As a rule, however, the reformation lasted no longer than the life of the deliverer. With each new generation came new idolatries; while each new cycle of sin brought its own peculiar penalty. And when, at last, their cry went up to God, He mercifully brought them out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set their feet upon the rock and established their goings.

The first king who brought them under his sway, came from the original home of Abraham, beyond the Euphrates. Little by little he had extended his power westward, till he finally swept down upon Canaan and made its people tributary. For eight years they remained in bondage. Then the Lord raised up Othniel [a] nephew of Caleb, as their deliverer. He was also their first judge. His strength lay in the Lord—for the Spirit of Jehovah was upon him: so he put himself at the head of his people for the purpose of effecting their deliverance. First he seized the garrisons of the invading king; then,

as the armies of Israel rallied about him, he defeated detachments of the enemy ; and finally he hazarded a general engagement in which he routed the Mesopotamians and drove them beyond the Euphrates. He judged Israel for forty years.

The next enemy that rose up against Israel was Eglon, king of Moab. Forming a league with the Ammonites and Amelekites, he crossed the Jordan, smote the Hebrews, and took possession of the site of Jericho—the city of palms. Here he remained for eighteen years, exacting heavy tributes from the people. But finally a deliverer was raised up in the person of EHUD,[b] the second judge. He was one of those left-handed Benjamites for which his tribe was remarkable.

Being at the head of a delegation that carried tribute to the king, he gained admittance to the royal presence, secretly carrying a two-edged dagger girded at his right side. On leaving the king, he withdrew as far as the carved images at Gilgal. Then dismissing his attendants, he returned to the king who had just retired to his summer-parlor. Announcing that he had a secret message from Jehovah, as the king reverently arose, Ehud plunged the dagger into his body, burying it so deeply that he could not draw it out. Then he locked the door of the summer-parlor and passed out by way of the porch. Before it was discovered that the king was slain, Ehud had escaped beyond the graven images as far as Mount Ephraim. With a blast of his trumpet, he gathered together a body of men in the mountain fastnesses and, rushing down to the plain, seized the fords of the Jordan, then fell upon the Moabites and slew 10,000 of their noblest warriors. So complete was the victory, that the land had rest for eighty years.

About this time the Philistines rose up against the tribes of Israel; but they were put to rout by SHAMGAR,[c] who slew 600 of them with an ox goad. For this bold deliverance, he is counted as the third judge of Israel. And now, the northern Canaanites had recovered from the blow dealt by Joshua and had become a great military power. They had nine hundred chariots of iron and were under the command of Sisera, an able leader. This formidable foe soon brought Israel into subjection and for the space of twenty years mightily oppressed them. The villages were plundered and the inhabitants trampled upon; the high-ways were lined with robbers and murderers, so that the people were compelled to use by-paths in making journeys. Everywhere they were waylaid, robbed and slain; till finally they had to seek refuge in the walled cities. It was in the midst of this grievous oppression that the Lord raised up DEBORAH[d] the prophetess who, with BARAK, is reckoned the fourth judge.

Deborah was a devout woman, versed in the Law of God. She dwelt under a palm tree—a well-known landmark in the southern part of Ephraim; and such was her reputation for wisdom that the people resorted to her for counsel and judgment. It is no doubt due to her wholesome influence that Israel repented and sought deliverance. Inspired of the Lord, she sent a message to Barak, instructing him to gather a force of 10,000 men at Mt. Tabor and give battle to the army of the king, assuring him that Jehovah had delivered the hosts of Sisera into his hands. At first, Barak shrunk from so formidable an enterprise; but finally he consented on condition that Deborah should enter the field of battle with him. This she agreed to do, at the same time

warning him that the honor of victory should be taken from him; for Sisera would neither be slain in battle nor yet captured, but would fall at the hands of a woman.

Going up into the north country, they marshalled the needed number of men and took up their position on Mount Tabor. As soon as Sisera learned of their advance, he led his forces to the great plain of Esdraelon. Barak at once swept down into the open plain and fell with impetuous fury upon the foe. "It was at this critical moment that a tremendous storm of sleet and hail gathered from the east and burst over the plain, driving full in the face of the advancing Canaanites. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The rain descended, the four rivulets of Megiddo were swelled into powerful streams, the torrent of the Kishon rose into a flood, the plain became a morass. The chariots and the horses, which should have gained the day for the Canaanites, turned against them. They became entangled in the swamp; the torrent of Kishon swept them away in its furious eddies; and in that wild confusion, the strength of the Canaanites was trodden down, and the horse-hoofs stamped and struggled by the means of the plungings and plungings of the mighty chiefs in the quaking morass and the rising streams. Far and wide the vast army fled far through the eastern branch of the plain of Endor. There, between Tabor and the Little Hermon, a carnage took place long remembered, in which the corpses lay fattening the ground."

Sisera fled in his chariot across the plain: then dismounting, he continued his flight on foot. At last, he came to the tenting-ground of Heber the Kenite—a descendant of Jethro, who maintained friendly relations with both Hebrews and Canaanites. Jael, the wife of

Heber, met Sisera at her tent-door and invited him to enter. Casting himself wearily upon the floor, he asked for water; and she brought him sour milk in her choicest vessel—a pledge that he should have the protection accorded by eastern hospitality. Exacting a promise from his hostess that she would not reveal the place of his concealment, he fell into a deep sleep—the sleep of utter exhaustion. And as he slept, she took a wooden tentpin and creeping up to her confiding guest, with one mighty blow of a mallet drove it through his head into the ground. Then as Barak was passing that way in pursuit, she beckoned him to her tent; and there lay his enemy, ingloriously slain by the hand of a woman.

The song of Deborah and Barak constitutes one of the richest gems of Hebrew poetry. Like a very bugle-call the note of triumph peals forth:

> "Awake! awake, Deborah! Awake! awake, utter a song!
> Arise, Barak! and lead thy captivity captive."

The battle is then described, telling how

> "They fought from heaven—
> The stars in their course fought against Sisera."

And closing sublimely—

> "So let all Thy enemies perish, O Lord!
> But let them that love Thee be as the sun
> When he goeth forth in his might!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LIVES OF THE JUDGES.

GIDEON AND ABIMELECH.

Invasion of Midianites 1—Call of Gideon 2—Cutting Down the Groves 3—Summoned to Lead Israel 4—Choosing His Soldiers 5—The Night Attack 6—The Enemy's Flight 7—The Triumph 8—Abimelech's Wickedness 9—Bramble King's End. 10

A BLESSED season of peace followed the terrible strife of years. But Israel soon fell into shameless idolatry; and then God's chastening was upon them. Wild hordes from the desert, fierce and terrible, swarmed like locusts over the land and devoured its increase. The people were helpless to stay the destructive tide. Their standing grain was trampled down, their threshing-floors plundered, their flocks and herds driven off—everything in mountain, hill and plain was devoured by these "Sons of the East." The very names of their leaders would strike terror to the heart—The Man-killer, The Pitiless, The Wolf; while their scarlet cloaks with chains of gold and ornaments of crescent shape, decking alike the camel and its ruthless master, was dazzling in the extreme. No wonder all Israel fled to the mountains and hid in dens and caves.[a]

But God did not forget His people; His ear was open to their cry. So He sent His prophet to reprove them. Then the Angel of the Lord came down and saluted GIDEON, a mighty man of valor, as he was threshing corn in his father's wine-press to hide it from the Midianites. And the Angel said, "The Lord be with thee!" But Gideon replied, "If the Lord be with us, why then is all

this befallen us?" The Lord commanded him to go in his might and save Israel. Gideon pleaded the poverty of his family and his own humble estate; but the Lord told him that he should smite the Midianites as one man. Again Gideon sought a sign by which he might be assured of Jehovah's favor. Then came the miracle of the meat-offering which, at the touch of his Visitor's staff, was consumed by fire bursting out from the rock. Gideon at once built an altar on the hallowed spot and dedicated it to Jehovah-Shalom—the Lord our Peace!

By this act, Gideon became a priest of God; but his father Joash was a priest of Baal. Since judgment must begin at home, he was instructed in a dream to break the image of Baal, cut down the idolatrous grove, and use the wood for burning the appointed sacrifice. By the aid of ten men, this heroic act was performed during the night, and when the morning revealed to the worshippers of Baal the destruction of the grove and the downfall of their god, they demanded that Gideon be put to death. But Joash cast contempt upon their god by saying, "Let Baal plead his own cause!" Then a new name was given Gideon, Jerubbaal—Let Baal plead—a proof of his victory and an argument against images.

Once more the Arab hosts swept across the desert and encamped on the plain of Esdraelon. And now Gideon was summoned to lead the armies of Israel. Trembling at the approach of so formidable a foe, he sought a sign from heaven as a witness that God would indeed deliver His people. He spread a fleece of wool on his threshing-floor, and in the morning it was wet with dew while the ground about it was dry. Again he spread the fleece, and in the morning it was dry, but the earth was wet with dew. With this double sign, he went forth with

the full assurance that the Lord was on his side and would deliver the enemy into his hands.

A force of 32,000 men gathered around Gideon, ready to spring from their mountain fastness upon the foe. But so large an army would forget the God of Battles and attribute their victory to themselves. By the command of Jehovah, it was proclaimed that all who were fearful and faint-hearted should return to their homes; and 22,000 at once withdrew from the field. The number being still too great, the Lord directed Gideon to gather them at "the well of trembling;" all who stooped down and drank should be rejected, while those who lifted the water in their hands and lapped it like a dog, should be retained. Only 300 of that vast host, eager to engage the foe, stood up and lapped the water; while all the rest, looking to their comfort, stooped down and drank at ease. So the little band of 300 took their trumpets and waited for the night.

At night-fall, the Lord commanded Gideon to take his armor-bearer and go to the camp of Midian. Creeping down the hill-side, they stole their way among the slumbering hosts, till all at once they heard a voice—it was one of the Midian soldiers telling a comrade his dream: a barleycake came rolling into camp and, striking a tent, stretched it flat upon the earth. And his fellow answered, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon; into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all the host." Again all was quiet, and Gideon and his servant crept back to their comrades. Dividing his men into three bands, each man was furnished with a horn, a torch, and an earthen pitcher. And at a given signal they blew a shrill blast, broke their pitchers with a crash, and waved their torches with the triumphant

shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Panic seized the foe—a mingled mass of men, women and children, with camels and herds, all rushing wildly about in fear-stricken confusion.

In the darkness, the Arabs could not tell friend from foe, and with drawn swords, they rushed down to the Jordan, slashing each other in their mad flight. The northern tribes were speedily marshalled and sent after the escaping host. Messengers were despatched throughout the hill-country and the men of Ephraim swept down upon the flying foe, cutting them to pieces. Oreb and Zeeb—the Raven and the Wolf—were caught and slain. On rushed the flying enemy—over the Jordan, into the uplands of Gilead; but Gideon with his three hundred pressed hard in pursuit. Now he reaches Succoth[b] whose princes refused him refreshments. Now he passed Penuel, where Jacob wrestled with the angel; and here, too, he is refused supplies. At last, overtaking Zebah and Zalmunna—the Man Killer and the Pitiless—with their broken remnant of 15,000 men, he scattered them in signal defeat and captured their chiefs.

And now begins the triumphal return. The elders of Succoth and Penuel are scourged to death with thorns and briers; the tower of Penuel is beaten down and its garrison put to death; and Zebah and Zalmunna receives the death-blow from his own powerful hand. Such a magnificent triumph was not without its reward. The people proposed to make Gideon their king; but he prudently declined the honor. He asked, however, for the golden ornaments taken from the Arab host. With these, he made a sacred ephod, which afterwards became an object of idolatrous worship—a sad ending, surely, to so glorious a victory. Under his leadership, the country

was in quiet forty years. Gideon stands as a noble figure in that idolatrous age, with "something of the past greatness of Joshua; something of the future grace of David."

The story of Abimelech stands in sad contrast to that of his father Gideon. He inherited his father's courage; but he had the low-bred nature of his mother—a slave-wife of Shechem. So he plotted against his brothers—seventy in all—and put them to death, only one escaping. Then he went to Shechem and prevailed upon the people to set him up as king; and there beside the oak where Joshua had solemnly exhorted the tribes of Israel, he received the coveted title. His brother Jothan, who had escaped, appeared on the rocks above and uttered the fable of the trees. Then disappearing as suddenly as he came, his name is heard no more.

Abimelech was indeed a bramble-king[c] whose tyranny was intolerable. Robber bands plundered him; while the people tried to throw off his yoke. An insurrection was planned against him; but he overthrew his opponents, destroyed their city, and sowed it with salt. Some took refuge in the temple of Baal, and these he destroyed by fire—1000 men and women being burnt to death. In his murderous frenzy, he went to Thebez to visit it with a like destruction. But while he was approaching the wall to apply the torch, a woman threw a piece of mill-stone down upon his head, and it broke his skull. With his dying breath, he called upon his armor-bearer to thrust him through with his sword; so that it might not be said that he fell by the hand of a woman. He was indeed a bramble-king—devouring his people, who, in turn, devoured him.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE LIVES OF THE JUDGES.

TOLA, JAIR, JEPHTHAH, IBZAN, ELON ABDON, SAMSON

The Rule of Tola and Jair[1]—The Ammonites in Arms[2]—Jephthah Chosen Leader[3]—His Victory[4]—The Sacrifice of his Daughter[5]—Routing Ephraim[6]—Samson[7]—His Riddle[8]—Slaying the Philistines[9]—Shorn of his Strength[10]—His Tragic End.[11]

THE man who succeeded Abimelech was known as TOLA[a]—a worm—insignificant in personality, unimportant as to state service. He dwelt in Mount Ephraim, and for twenty-three years stood at the head of the tribes. Following him was JAIR,[b] a man of Gilead. He had thirty sons whom he made masters of thirty cities. They rode, like princes, on white asses, and the towns they ruled were known as Havoth-Jair—Jair's villages. His judgeship lasted twenty-two years.

After the uneventful rule of Tola and Jair, dark days settled down upon Judea. On the north, the idols of Syria were supplanting the worship of Jehovah; on the south, the gods of the Philistines had won the people; while on the east, those of Moab and Ammon held sway. Tribulations multiplied. Once more the cry of distress went up to the Lord: once more he sent deliverance. There was a man in Gilead with remarkable qualities of leadership; and to him the people turned in their extremity. His name was JEPHTHAH. He was the son of Gilead, his mother being a low class concubine. When his father died, his brethren drove him from their home: so he fled to the border of the desert. There he headed a roving band of freebooters who lived a rough, reckless life, preying on the Ammonites. His deeds of daring gave a glow to

his name—the more so since he plundered the enemies of Israel; and this led the chiefs of Gilead to choose him as their leader. He agreed to head the expedition on condition that if he drove out the enemy, they should make him ruler for life.

Jephthah sent an embassy to the king of Ammon,[c] asking why he had come to make war on the Hebrews. In reply, the king demanded the surrender of the lands beyond the Jordan, which, he claimed, had been wrested from his ancestors. Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah—not the spirit of understanding, but of power and might. His religion was a strange admixture of the worship of the true God and the practice of the darkest heathen rites. And so, recognizing Jehovah as the God of Battles, but following the usage of Moab and Ammon, on whose borders he spent his free-booting life, he vowed that he would devote, as a burnt-offering to God, whoever should come out of his door to meet him. Then mustering his forces at Mizpeh, he burst upon the enemy with the fury of the storm, defeating them with great slaughter and taking twenty of their cities.

The news of victory soon reached Mizpeh; and when Jephthah returned to claim his reward and fulfil his vow, his only daughter came out to meet him, dancing in the gladness of her heart to the sound of the timbrel. It was a terrible moment as the two met. The father, stunned at the sight of his beloved child, cried out in the agony of despair, "Alas, my daughter; thou hast brought me very low: I have opened my mouth unto Jehovah, and I cannot go back." The brave-spirited girl, smothering her sorrow, heroically submitted to her appointed fate, and replied, "My father, if thou hast

opened thy mouth unto Jehovah, do to me according to the word which has proceeded out of thy mouth." The only respite she asked was the space of two months to wander through the mountains with her companions and bewail her lot. The two months ended, she returned and her father "did with her according to his vow."

The people of Ephraim, jealous of Jephthah's success, plunged the tribes into civil war. They threatened to burn his house over his head and taunted his followers with being outcasts of Ephraim. In the battle which followed, the Ephraimites were utterly routed, being detected at the ford of the Jordan by their pronunciation of the word Shibboleth, which they uttered as if it were Sibboleth. The entire loss to Ephraim was 42,000. Jephthah judged Israel for six years, after which he died and was buried in Mount Gilead, The judges between Jephthah and Samson have little more than a name. IBZAN[d] judged Israel for seven years; but used his office for family ends. ELON[e] ruled as judge ten years —the place where he was buried, Aijalon, being named after him. ABDON[f] filled the office for eight years. His family rode in royal state on white asses.

The Philistines[g] having become dangerously strong, began to harass Israel. It was a struggle of a century. And as the strife went on, the Lord prepared a man of marvellous strength to thwart this fierce foe. This new deliverer was SAMSON[h]—a man of miraculous power, being gifted with special strength by the Spirit of God. As a Nazarite, his hair was not suffered to be shorn and he lived a life of strict abstinence. There was a broad vein of humor coupled with startling recklessness in all his achievements; and we need not wonder that a life which began in miracle should end in tragedy.

When Samson reached man's estate, he sought a woman of the Philistines as his wife. On his way to visit her, a young lion rushed upon him ; and he slew it with his hands. As he passed that way again, he saw a nest of bees in its carcass ; and from this he framed the riddle :

> "Out of the eater came forth meat;
> Out of the strong came forth sweetness!"

If the young men at the bridal feast could give the correct answer, he was to pay a specified forfeit ; if not, each of them was to pay the forfeit. Unable to discover its meaning, they appealed to the bride ; and to such desperate straits were they driven, that they threatened her and her father's house if she did not secure the secret. When they gave the answer, he rebuked them, saying, "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye would not have found out my riddle." Then he went out and slew thirty of the Philistines and paid the pledge with the spoils ; after which he returned to his own home.

After a time, Samson again visited his wife, but found her married to another man. He revenged himself by catching 300 foxes, and tying them tail to tail with a firebrand between each two, he set them loose in the cornfields of the Philistines. Then the Philistines burned his wife and her father to death ; but Samson fell upon them and smote them "hip and thigh with a great slaughter ;" after which he took refuge on a strong rock called Etam, in the tribe of Judah. The Philistines at once marched against Judah, who gladly made peace with them by giving up Samson. Binding him with two cords, they brought him down to the Philistine camp ; but at the shout of triumph, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, he broke the cords as if they were

burnt flax, and snatching up the jaw-bone of an ass, he slew 1000 of the enemy. This deliverance raised Samson to the rank of Judge, which he held for twenty years.

His next exploit was to carry off the gates of Gaza, which the Philistines had shut on him at night, intending to kill him in the morning. Anticipating their plot, he went out at midnight, tore away the gates with their posts and bars, and carried them to the top of a hill fully twenty miles away. He next formed a fatal alliance with a woman called Delilah. At the instigation of the lords of the Philistines, she enticed him to reveal the secret of his strength, and after amusing himself by feigning to divulge its source, he finally told her that it lay in his hair; and as he slept, she had him shorn of his locks. Then waking him with the cry, "The Philistines are upon thee!" he rallied in vain; for his strength was gone.

In cruel revenge, the Philistines put out his eyes, led him down to Gaza, and made him grind in the prison. But as his hair grew, his strength came back. Meantime, he was a source of amusement to his enemies. They held a great feast in the Temple of Dagon and brought forth Samson to make sport for them. After giving exhibitions of his marvellous strength, he stood between two pillars which supported the roof. With a prayer to Jehovah, he bore with all his might upon the pillars, and as they gave way, the whole building fell upon the assembled people. Thus he slew more at his death than in his whole life. His kinsmen took up his body and buried it; and his name is enrolled among the worthies who through faith obtained a good report.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE LIVES OF THE JUDGES.

ELI AND HIS SONS: CHILDHOOD OF SAMUEL.

Eli the Judge [1]—His Strength and Weakness [2]—The Sin of His Sons [3]—Their Defeat and Death [4]—The Death of Eli [5]—Birth of Samuel [6]—Ministering Before the Lord [7]—The Night Vision [8]—The Word of Judgment.[9]

IN the interval between the appointment of special judges of Israel, it would seem that the high-priest performed the duties of that office. With the death of Samson, who wasted so much of his strength in reckless deeds and sinful indulgence, the government of God's people, therefore, rested with ELI—a man eminent for piety and estimable for the gentler virtues. He resided at Shiloh, by the tabernacle of God; and for forty years he judged Israel, dying at the age of ninety-eight.

It was during the priesthood of Eli that two great men arose in Israel—the one endowed with superhuman physical strength, the other with marvellous moral power—Samson and Samuel—whose lives stand in such striking contrast to each other: the one self-destructive, because coupled with moral weakness; the other of boundless ability, because of the invincible power of prayer. The strength of Eli—his mild, generous, unselfish nature—was also his weakness; for lacking in the sterner virtues, he failed to reprove evil although he loathed it, and to punish the evil-doer however much he merited it.

As Eli grew old, his public duties were largely transferred to his sons, Hophni and Phineas. But these men

wickedly used their office, not only for personal advantage but even for criminal ends. They held in contempt the regulations of the Mosaic law touching sacrificial meats, and surrounded themselves with licentious women who attended to the holy things of the tabernacle. Thus the entire service of the sanctuary was brought into disrepute and became wholly defiled. And yet, the aged priest, with his mild, gentle ways, failed to rebuke, with proper severity, the godless conduct of his sons. So the Lord raised up a prophet who brought the terrible message to Eli that destruction awaited his house because his sons made themselves vile and he did not reprove them. And Eli bowed to the awful decree and said, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good."

But the Lord is slow to wrath ; ten years passed away before His judgment began to fall upon the house of Eli. Israel became involved in war with the Philistines,[a] who had renewed their strength since the days of Samson. In the first battle, they lost 4,000 men. Then they sent to Shiloh for the ark of the covenant ; and the sons of Eli came to the camp as its priestly attendants. And when they saw the ark, all Israel sent up a mighty shout, so that the earth rang again. But when the Philistines learned of the advent of the ark—which they regarded as the God of Israel that had brought them out of Egypt and had wrought such mighty works—they were at first filled with sore dismay ; then rallying from their fear, they stirred up each other for the conflict by shouting, "Quit yourselves like men, and fight!" With the honor of their god at stake, they plunged into battle, fought with all the fierceness of religious frenzy, and slew 30,000 of Israel's footmen. Besides, the ark of

God was taken; and among the slain were the sons of Eli—Hophni and Phineas.

It was a time of great anxiety; and people everywhere waited in suspense for the news of the battle. In Shiloh,[b] the town from which the ark of God had been taken, the anxiety was most intense. Eli was old and blind, and his heart trembled for the ark of the Lord. And that he might catch the news a little earlier, he kept up an eager watch by the wayside. Hour after hour passed by; and lo, as the evening shadows began to lengthen, a messenger arrived from the scene of conflict. No words were needed to tell his story; for the dust on his head and his rent garments, revealed the sad fact of Israel's defeat. Yes; Israel was beaten, Hophni and Phineas were among the slain, and the ark of God had been carried off by the enemy. And as the terrible news was told, the high priest, overcome by the shock, fell backwards from his seat at the side of the gate; and being old and heavy, his neck was broken by the fall. And so, this man of gentle nature died—brought in sorrow to his grave by the sins of his sons. He had judged Israel forty years.

With the closing days of Eli is intimately bound the early life of SAMUEL. As a child of prayer, Samuel again and again exhibited the power of prayer. His father, Elkinah, lived in the hill country of Ephraim—a worthy man of the tribe of Levi, who took his whole family, each year, to Shiloh to attend the Feast of the Passover. He had two wives, one of whom was blessed with children; but Hannah, the other wife, had no child. Her natural disappointment, coupled with the taunts of her rival, added bitterness to her life. She longed and prayed for a son; and she vowed that if the Lord would

fulfill the desire of her heart, she would devote her child to His service. The Lord heard her prayer and the child Samuel was born—a Nazarite from his birth. Endowed with the spirit of prophecy, the mother poured forth the gratitude of her heart in a song of noblest sentiment—a song which ranks among the most beautiful and sublime of Hebrew lyrics.

The Scripture story gives a beautiful picture of the devout family going up to Shiloh to offer sacrifices and to pay their vows. But now that the child Samuel is born, the mother stays at home till he is old enough to accompany her to the great feast—there to present him to the Lord, in whose house he is to abide forever. And as she returned to her home, she left the little lad behind to administer in the tabernacle before Jehovah, clad in a linen ephod such as was worn by the priests. And each year, as she came up to the feast, she brought her boy a little coat—one made by her own loving hands.

The sweet simplicity of Samuel's life stands in strong contrast to the gross wickedness of Eli's sons. And as the lad ministered before the Lord, from year to year, growing up under the very shadow of the altar, he won the favor of God and man. And now, at the age of twelve, an event occurred which marked Samuel for the prophetic office. Eli was far advanced in life—having judged Israel for thirty years; and he slept at night in a chamber attached to the tabernacle. Samuel found a place of rest in the Holy Place. One night, as the seven-branched candlestick which had been lighted at the evening sacrifice, still sent up its flickering flame, the Lord called Samuel by name; and the child answered, "Here am I!" This was repeated three times: then Eli knew that the Lord had spoken to the lad and he

instructed him to answer, saying, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

Then the Lord said, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. In addition, the Lord told Samuel how the sons of Eli had made themselves vile and their father did not reprove them; and now so great was their guilt that neither sacrifice nor burnt-offering should ever purge it away. When morning came Samuel was afraid to reveal to the aged priest the vision of the night; but Eli called him and told him not to hide a single thing from him. And when Samuel uttered the words of divine judgment, Eli said, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good!" Thus Samuel was constituted a prophet of God as well as judge of Israel.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SAMUEL, THE PROPHET AND JUDGE.

Two-fold Office of Samuel 1—The Distress of Israel 2—Gathering at Mizpeh 3.—The Victory of Prayer 4—The Call for a King 5—The Transfer of Power 6—The Life-work of Samuel 7—The School of the Prophets 8—Samuel's Death.9

THE most of the men who were raised up to judge Israel were warriors. SAMUEL[a] was the only one who united his judicial duties with the prophetic office. And while they went forth, sword in hand, at the head of Israel's armies; he resorted to prayer and won his victories by the sword of the Spirit. It is this fact which distinguishes his rule from all the rest. There is no royal display, as in the case of Abdon; no heathen alliances like those of the family of Ibzan; no rash vow like that of Jephthah; no licentious deeds or foolish use of power such as marred the life of Samson. His was a life of lofty tone, of simple, godlike trend—one of the most glorious in all the history of God's people.

The ark of God, which the Philistines had captured,[b] proved to be a destructive trophy. It cast down their images, brought plagues upon their people, destroyed their fruit and grain; and finally, after it had dealt out death and destruction for the space of seven months, they sent it back to Israel with all the honors of a god. But the Philistines still ravaged the country; and for twenty years their yoke was upon the necks of its people. Mourning the absence of the ark from Shiloh and groaning beneath the oppression of the enemy, they turned in their straits to Samuel the prophet of God. Since the death of Eli, Samuel had exercised little or no authority

beyond that which was usual with the prophets; but now he is called, in a public way, to take up the reins of government.

First of all, Samuel bade the people put away all false gods—the Baals and Ashteroths, which represented the sun and the moon—and prepare their hearts for the service of Jehovah. Then he gathered all Israel together at Mizpeh, where they held a solemn fast-day, confessing their sins and pouring out water before Jehovah—their baptism of repentance as well as a renewal of their covenant. It was in connection with this solemn service that the people publicly invested him with the authority of a judge. This gathering of Israel alarmed the Philistines; and they marshalled their forces and marched to the place for the purpose of scattering the people. Frightened at the approaching host, the Israelites appealed to Samuel that he should not cease to cry unto Jehovah that He might save them from the hands of their enemies. Samuel prepared a lamb for a burnt-offering, and just as he was in the act of making the sacrifice and sending up his prayer to God, the Philistines drew near in battle array—the spiritual pitted against the physical!

Here, as everywhere, was brought to pass the saying that is written, "Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts!" And yet, while the Lord brought victory to Israel, it was through natural, physical means. But in these means, His arm was nevertheless revealed. For as the Philistine army with all its weapons of warfare was advancing to the attack, the Lord sent a terrible storm of thunder and lightning against them. Then the Israelites, taking advantage of the enemy's alarm and inspired by the

interposition of Jehovah, fell upon the foe with such impetuosity that they routed them in the first onset, slew vast numbers of them on the spot, and pursued the remnant with great slaughter to Bethcar—the House of Lambs. As a memorial of their victory, Samuel set up a stone where the pursuit ceased and named it Ebenezer—the Stone of Help, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"

This disastrous defeat broke the spirits of the Philistines and put an end to their oppressions; so the land once more had peace. For twelve years, Samuel continued to judge Israel—the last to hold the office. Toward the close of his life, he appointed his sons as deputies in certain places; but like the sons of Eli, they did not walk in the steps of their father, "but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." So the elders of Israel came to Samuel and asked him to make them a king to judge them like the other nations. The thing displeased Samuel; but he laid the matter before the Lord. The Lord told him to hearken unto the people; but at the same time to enter a solemn protest against their purpose and to show them what should come to pass if a king were to rule over them.

Meantime, Samuel had his seat of judgment at Ramah, from which he made an annual circuit of the neighboring cities, administering justice at the sacred stones of Bethel,[c] Gilgal[d] and Mizpeh[e]—all in the highlands of Benjamin. And now we get little glimpses of him from time to time in the establishment of the kingdom. And when he laid down his civil authority and transferred it to Saul as Israel's first king, we find that he maintained the same pure character, the same lofty dignity, the

same unflinching faith, and the same devout dependence upon God. It was his privilege to anoint the first king and, when he became unworthy of the office, to single out David from among the sons of Jesse and appoint him as Saul's successor. And although his later years were saddened by the gross defection of his king, still he ended his days in peace—dying at Ramah, where he was born and where, for twelve years, he had judged Israel—the last and noblest to hold the office.

Samuel was one of the greatest men that Israel ever produced. His leading strength lay in the simplicity of his life, coupled with an uncompromising fidelity to truth and right. He grew up at the very foot of the altar into all the greatness demanded of the great man of his age. His public life began with a message to the aged High-priest, declaring that he was rejected of God; it closed with a message to his king announcing God's displeasure and his consequent rejection. But the chief beauty and glory of his life consisted in the power with which he would plead before the throne of grace. A child of prayer, his was distinctively the spirit of prayer.

To Samuel is credited the establishment of "The School of the Prophets." The originator of plans for the development of a higher and better life, he was the maker of a new epoch—the Luther of his times. As a civil ruler, he united hostile tribes under his authority; as a spiritual teacher and guide, he joined them to Jehovah. The result was a unification of the nation; while from every side the people came up to the worship of the Lord. His influence did not stop with his authority. When God granted the people a king, Samuel set bounds to sovereign power. And when the honor of authority passed over to the kingly office, Saul had

Samuel as his preceptor and the little good that appears in his life is directly traceable to the influence of the school of the prophets.

Samuel holds a peculiar place in the making of Israel. He stands between the old and the new—the old with all its strife; but along with it, the simplicity of the theocracy: the new with all its struggle for a statelier future. And yet, under his wise control, there was a revolution without bloodshed; a new order of things without anarchy. Such a peaceful transfer of power would have been impossible under the earlier judges. But now, united in national and religious life, the movement was at once intelligent and universal; and while involving a radical change of government, it was also marked by oneness of spirit and unity of action. But the moulding genius in it all was Samuel—patriot and prophet, teacher and statesman, ruler and judge. And when he died, all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him—not among the sepulchres of the great; but in his own house: thus consecrating the place where he had lived as the tomb in which his body should rest.

CHAPTER XL.

THE LIFE OF SAUL.

The Cry for a King[1]—Saul Anointed[2]—Chosen by Lot[3]—Defeat of the Ammonites[6]—The Solemn Inaugural[5]—Preparing for War[6]—The Defeat of the Philistines[7]—The Gathering Gloom[8]—The Dishonored End[9].

THE peace and prosperity of the people, the advanced age of Samuel and his consequent inability to cope with a foreign foe, the wickedness and worthlessness of his sons—such were the things that led Israel to raise the common cry, "Make us a king to judge us, like all the nations."

It is by the grace of God that men rule; so the Lord appointed a king over Israel. The incident, in itself, was trivial. SAUL, the son of Kish, went in search of his father's asses. Passing through Mount Ephraim, he came to Ramah where the prophet dwelt and resolved to consult him; for nothing was hid from the man of God. Samuel at once recognized in Saul "the desire of Israel," and received him with tokens of honor and approval. Next day he accompanied Saul on his homeward journey and, at the place of parting, called upon him to stand still, while he declared to him the will of God, and anointed him as "captain over the Lord's inheritance." Then kissing the new-made king, he gave him three signs to prove that Jehovah was with him. These in turn were fulfilled; the last of which placed him in the company of prophets as they came down from "the hill of God."

The private appointment, however, must have public recognition; so Israel was summoned to Mizpeh in

solemn assembly. At the prophet's side stood the high-priest, arrayed in his official robes; sacrifices were offered in keeping with the occasion; and then came the casting of lots, which embraced every man of the nation. The first lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin; the second, on the clan of Matri; the third, on the family of Kish; and the fourth, on Saul his eldest son. But when the lot was announced, Saul was missing. Discovered among the baggage, he was brought before the people; and as he stood there, head and shoulders above the assembly, the shout went up from the gathered host, "Long live the king!"

When the people, according to Eastern usage, brought presents to the king, some failed to do so and even scoffed at the aspirations of the young Benjamite. But Saul took no notice of the slight and waited his time to prove his worth. It soon came. The Ammonites swept in upon Gilead; and as the news spread, all Israel was in dismay. The evil tidings reached Saul as he was driving his oxen from the field. Filled with righteous wrath, he cut the animals into pieces, and sent the bleeding parts throughout the land, with the threat that a like fate awaited those who did not come out after Saul and Samuel. Three hundred and thirty thousand responded, and with these Saul fell upon the foe and put them to utter rout. The people now clamored for the punishment of those who had despised their king; but Saul declared that not a man should suffer death on the day that the Lord brought deliverance to Israel.

The prompt marshalling of the tribes and their signal victory placed Saul securely in the kingdom. All that was now needed was his solemn inaugural. For this purpose a national convention was gathered at Gilgal,

the first camping ground of Israel. After the proper sacrifices were offered, the aged prophet reminded the people of his own faithful service and Jehovah's gracious care. He assured them of continued prosperity if they obeyed the voice of God ; but of certain rebuke, if they rebelled against Him. And then, to emphasize his appeal and mark the divine approval, at his call the thunders rolled over their heads and the rain dropped from the clear summer sky. Thus Saul became king. At first, he lived in native simplicity, following the divine leadings as announced by the prophet. And though in the end he signally failed, to him must be credited the beginnings of empire that ever remained the pride of the people.

The change of government, with its unifying effect upon the tribes of Israel, stirred up their old enemies, the Philistines, and brought on the struggle for supremacy. To meet the foe, Saul gathered a band of 3,000 men —2,000 of whom were kept under his command, while the third 1,000 were stationed at the home town with his son Jonathan. A successful assault, on the part of Jonathan, was the signal for Saul to sound his war-horn ; and in answer, all Israel assembled at Gilgal. Here the prophet was to meet the king and offer sacrifice ; but while he tarried, a panic seized the recruiting hosts, many of whom sought refuge beyond the Jordan, while others slipped away and hid in rocks and caves. The enemy increased ; the forces of Saul diminished ; and still the prophet tarried. It was the great testing-time of the king !

In his impatience, Saul yielded to the seeming necessity ; and as the smoke of sacrifice encircled the waiting troops, the prophet suddenly appeared, rebuked the king,

and pronounced judgment on him and his house. Then he withdrew; and the king, gathering up his remaining forces, hastened to the uplands of Gibeah where he joined Jonathan. Dark indeed was the hour; for bands of Philistines laid waste the land. But God had not forsaken his people. With the daring of despair, Jonathan burst into the Philistine camp and striking down a score of the foe—supported only by his armor bearer, threw the entire host into terror-stricken flight. And as they madly fled, they turned their arms against each other; the Hebrew captives struck for liberty; the rocks poured out their hosts of refugees; while Saul, hastening from the opposite heights, joined in the general pursuit. The rout was complete. But the brilliancy of victory was dimmed by the vow that no man, on pain of death, should taste food till the sun had set. As Jonathan pursued the enemy through the forest, he dipped his staff into a honeycomb and put it to his mouth; and only the intervention of the people kept the king from executing his rash vow.

At this juncture, Saul's star begins to wane. He defeats the Amelekites; but he offends Jehovah by reserving for himself the wealth of spoil. Rebuked by the prophet, he pleads for mercy, catching the skirt of Samuel's robe which is rent in his hand. It was a prophecy: God would thus rend the kingdom from his hand. New victories are yet won; but the praise of other names is sounded in his ears. Ensigns of royalty are adopted; but his mind is filled with evil forebodings and the horrors of melancholy shroud his life. The son of Jesse with a Psalm upon his lips and the Spirit of God in his heart, is summoned to try the soothing power of music; but the charm is soon gone and the javelin, hurled at

David's head, tells the king's relentless rage. The shocking sacrilege of slaying the priests of Nob, the massacre of the inhabitants of that fated city, and crowning it all, the settled purpose to slay him whom the Lord had chosen as the coming king—these things mark the downward course of the man, till he stands on the very brink of despair : one more plunge, and he will sink forever beneath the black waters !

The Philistines now massed their forces and Saul set out to check them. But dark forebodings filled his soul. He fain would have summoned the prophet ; but Samuel was dead. He gladly would have consulted the high-priest ; but he was in exile. In his extremity, he resorted in disguise at the dead of night to a woman who dwelt at the Spring of Dor—one of the soothsayers who had escaped his fury ; and he prevailed upon her to call up the shade of Samuel. In answer, the word of doom was pronounced against the king—defeat to his army and death to himself and his sons. At the announcement, Saul fell prostrate upon the earth and fainted with fear. Rallying once more, he arose, partook of some food and returned to the camp. All day long the battle raged, the Israelites being everywhere driven before the fierce onset of the foe. Little by little the enemy closed in upon the king. At last his three sons were slain, and he himself received a deadly wound. Upon the refusal of his armor bearer to thrust him through, he cast himself upon his own sword—thus dying the despairing death of the suicide. The Philistines carried his body in triumph from city to city. They then struck off his head and set it up as a trophy in the temple of Dagan ; while the trunk was nailed to the wall of Bethshan. The men of Jabesh-Gilead, however, stole across the

Jordan by night, took down the bodies of Saul and his sons, and carried them back to their city. And there to save them from further indignity, they burned them and buried their ashes beneath the spreading branches of a tree.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE EARLY LIFE OF DAVID.

A Festal Day at Bethlehem[1]—David Anointed[2]—David in the Fields[3]—As the Court Minstrel[4]—Goliath of Gath[5]—Slain by David[6]—David's Promotion[7]—His Perils.[8]

THE early life of David is made up of charming incident and thrilling adventure. The sweet simplicity with which the ruddy lad steps before us, gives him a place in our hearts; and at once he becomes to us a David—a beloved one, a darling. Once a year, it would seem, the people of Bethlehem held a great sacrificial feast, at which the elders of the town would preside. On one of these festival occasions, the prophet Samuel suddenly came upon the scene, driving a heifer before him and bearing a horn filled with the consecrated oil of the Tabernacle. The elders were alarmed at his approach; but he assured them that his mission was one of peace, and bade them and the house of Jesse to sanctify themselves. He had come to anoint the future king.

At the appointed time, the sacrifice was slain, and the prophet stood ready to pour out the anointing oil. First came the eldest son of Jesse, noble in form—a second Saul. But him the Lord rejected; for while man looketh on the outward appearance, Jehovah looketh on the heart. In like manner one after another is rejected, till seven of Jesse's sons have passed in review before the

prophet. Then said Samuel to Jesse, "Are all thy sons here?" No; there was yet one—a mere lad—out among the sheep. Now the care of sheep was commonly committed to slaves, or, it might be, to some despised member of the household. But the prophet ordered that the lad be called; and when he appeared, the flush of health upon his cheek, the prophet arose at the divine bidding and poured the sacred oil upon his head. It was his last official act—a fit closing to his noble life. From that day the Spirit of the Lord rested upon David.

The shepherd prince must now be trained for the throne. And for this, two influences were at work—the one strengthening his arm, the other refining his heart. As he led his father's flocks by day or kept lonely watch by night, his mind opened up to those powerful influences which burst into music and won him the name of "The sweet singer of Israel:" for as the Spirit touched the chords of his soul, he kept time and tune with the strings of his harp. But his life was not that of an idle minstrel; it was filled with active duties, even dangers. In the care of the flocks, he measured strength with the lion and the bear, and engaged in daring exploits against the plundering hordes of the Philistines.

Meantime, an evil spirit seized the king and fits of madness darkened his life; for the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him and the words of the prophet were working up toward their dreaded fulfilment. As music was supposed to have a magical effect, the king's advisors urged him to try its soothing charms. The son of Jesse was already known for his comely person and prudent conduct; but, in particular, for his minstrel skill. Saul, therefore, sent to Bethlehem and summoned him to court. Harp in hand, the youth journeyed to

Gibeah and presented himself before his sovereign. Strange, indeed, was the contrast between that bright young life, fresh from the fields, and the gloomy cast of the king's countenance which spoke the gloomier state of his mind. But the sound of that sweet voice as it swelled into a Psalm of simple trust—its soothing effect heightened by the rhythmic touch of the harp—lighted the king's face and sent new cheer to his soul. So the shepherd lad became court minstrel, dividing his time between the care of the flocks and his efforts to drive away the king's madness with the charm of song.

Once more, the war-horn sounds; for the Philistines are gathering their armies against Israel. Pushing their way up the hill-passes, they post themselves on the plain south of the valley of Elah; while Saul takes position on the northern slope—a narrow stream coursing its way between. Every morning, Goliath of Gath advanced in front of the Philistine line, stalked down the hill-side across the intervening channel, and dared the bravest of Israel to decide the issues of war by single combat. He was a man of immense height and marvellous strength, wearing a heavy coat of mail and carrying a spear whose shaft was like a weaver's beam. At his challenge, all Israel was filled with dismay, none daring to face so formidable a foe. For forty days, this champion went up and down before Israel, blaspheming their God and defying their armies.

One day, just as the armies were drawn up in battle array, David entered camp with a supply of food for his three elder brethren. On reaching the baggage, he left the provisions with the guard; and as he hurried to the front, Goliath strode forth and repeated the challenge. The Spirit of the Lord resting upon him, David offered

to go out to do battle; and, in spite of the taunts of his elder brother, he found his way to the king. He knew that the same God who had delivered him from the lion and the bear, would also save him from the might of the Philistine. As he went forth to the conflict, he cast aside the king's armor and, clad in his simple shepherd garb, took nothing but his staff and his shepherd's sling. The giant had already recrossed the stream and was striding up the hill-side when David reached the bank. Gathering five smooth stones from the brook, he quickly crossed and challenged the Philistine to single combat. The giant looked in scorn upon the ruddy youth and disdained to deal with a foe whose only weapon was a shepherd's stick, as if he had come out to fight a dog. So he cursed David by his gods. Committing himself and his cause to the God of Israel, David rushed upon his foe and hurling a stone full in his face, he smote him on the forehead and felled him to the earth. Then quickly seizing the sword of his antagonist, he struck off his head and, carrying away the bloody trophy, laid it at the king's feet.

The victory over Goliath marks the beginning of a new period in David's life. As he entered the king's tent with the trophies of his victory he met Jonathan, who presented him with his own mantle together with sword and bow and girdle—a meeting which proved the beginning of that friendship and devotion which no change of fortune could affect. At first, David is appointed armor-bearer to the king; then he is made captain of a thousand; and, on his marriage to the king's daughter, he becomes the commander of the royal bodyguard. His services at the court won for him repeated praise and put him in position to exercise those gifts which after-

wards strengthened him in his kingdom. But each new success brought new danger. For when the women went forth from every city to greet the victorious army and sang to the sound of the timbrel,

> "Saul hath slain his thousands:
> But David his ten thousands!"

the heart of the king was filled with jealousy and he began to plot against David as if he were his bitterest foe.

In a fit of jealousy, the king hurled his javelin at David, intending to thrust him through; but by a skillful turn, the deadly weapon was avoided and David escaped. From open assault he turned to cunning plot. He promised David his daughter Merah to wife; but imposed a task which incurred the greatest risk. David met the demand of the king, only to find that Saul had given his daughter to another—perhaps for the very purpose of stirring up new strife; but failing in this, he gave him his younger daughter Michel. And now the wrath of Saul breaks out in all its fury. Again he resorts to the javelin, and the deadly weapon all but transfixes its intended victim to the wall. The order was then given to slay David; but the news was brought to him by his faithful wife and he was let down by the wall and escaped to the aged prophet. Several attempts were still made on his life; but each time he escaped the fury of the king. Finally, there was a reconciliation; but it lasted only a short time. By the friendly warning of Jonathan, he again escaped; so he was once more an outlaw.

CHAPTER XLII.

DAVID THE KING.

David Outlawed[1]—Amid Enemies[2]—Proclaimed King[3]—Founded Jerusalem[4]—Moving the Ark[5]—Entering the City Gates[6]—Organizing the People and Subduing Enemies[7]—David's Fall and Repentance[8]—His Closing Years.[9]

A KING without a court, David for a time enjoyed the protection of the King of Gath. Returning to Judea, he made the rocky region near Bethlehem his place of refuge. Here he was joined by his household, together with those who stood in dread of Saul. They were sustained by foraging the fields of the Philistines—thus a welcome ally to the neighboring Israelites. Meantime, the fury of Saul increased and he hunted David "as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountain." In his hot pursuit, Saul entered the very cave where David was in hiding; but instead of slaying the king, David crept up to him in the darkness, cut a piece from Saul's mantle with his dagger; and escaping to the hillside, waved it before him as proof that he had no evil design upon his life. In reply Saul acknowledged his sin and pledged to do David no harm.

But David's increasing strength stirred up the old jealousy; and again he gave proof of his clemency toward the king by stealing up to him as he lay asleep and taking from his side his spear and cruse of water. And now events multiply. David takes his last tender leave of Jonathan: Samuel dies and is buried with honors at Ramah: a fugitive from his king and an

enemy of the Philistines, David makes peace with the king of Gath and is settled with his band—600 strong—in the city of Ziglag. Here he is summoned to join king Achish in the march against Saul; but through the jealousy of the Philistine he withdrew from the field and returned to his home. In his absence, the Amelekites had plundered the town and carried off the women and children. David quickly pursued them, fell upon them in the desert, recovered all that had been taken away, and robbed them of their richest spoils. And now, the stupendous struggle is ended; Saul and his sons are slain; and but little stands between David and the throne.

At the command of God, David moved to Hebron, where he was anointed king over the tribe of Judah. Meantime, Abner proclaimed Ish-bosheth, the eldest living son of Saul, as king over Israel, with his royal residence east of the Jordan. A clash of arms was inevitable. Abner advanced to Gibeah where he was met by the men of Judah. Here by mutual agreement the issue was to be decided by a combat between twelve Benjamites and twelve men of Judah. In the struggle, they thrust each other through; and in the battle which ensued, Israel was defeated. As the war progressed, "David waxed stronger and stronger and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker," until at last there was none to dispute his right to the throne.

Seventeen years have passed since David's anointing by the prophet; and now the elders of all the tribes assemble at Hebron and offer him the crown. The inaugural feast was at once instituted, and "There was joy in Israel." David's first act was to choose a place for his capital. North of Hebron stood the citadel

of Jebus. It was a rock-bound fastness—an inland Gibraltar—whose dwellers had never been subdued. The hazardous enterprise was undertaken; the stronghold, captured; and Jebus became the capital of the nation—no longer Jebus, but Jerusalem, The Place of Peace! The new city became the scene of intense activity. Walls of defence were to be built, dwellings erected: while the workers in wood and stone were brought from Tyre, and the timbers from Lebanon by way of the sea. The Philistines, startled at the growing greatness, crowded up from the plain and prepared for an assault. The hosts of David charged upon them like the breaking of waters from a mountain lake, and utterly overwhelmed them. Again they rallied; again they suffered a destructive defeat—their last onslaught on God's chosen people.

David next planned to make Jerusalem the religious center of the nation. To this end, he decided to build a Tabernacle on Mount Moriah, and by a solemn ceremony placed the Ark of the Lord within it. Going to Kirjath-jearim, where the Philistines had deposited it, a vast convocation from all parts of the land gathered there to take part in the festivities. The Ark was placed upon a cart, drawn by oxen; and with its precious burden, the mighty assembly took up their march toward Jerusalem. But the death of Uzzah, who impiously touched the Ark, put a sudden stop to the joyous procession. For three months, the Ark lay at the house of Obed-edom. Then, the service of the Levites being engaged, the march was taken up with fear and trembling; but after a few steps were taken, a halt was made and sacrifice was offered unto the Lord. And as they again moved forward, the cry went up from all the host.

"Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered!" after which a new song burst from their lips,

> "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest,
> Thou and the Ark of Thy strength.
> Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness
> And let Thy saints shout for joy!"

The grand procession moved to the music of every known instrument; while David, laying aside his royal robe and putting on the dress of the Levite, suited his motion to the measure and danced before the Ark. Their approach to the citadel of Zion was marked by the glad refrain,

> "Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
> And be ye lift up ye everlasting doors,
> And the King of Glory shall come in!"

The watchman from the tower sounded the challenge, "Who is this King of Glory?" And the answer was echoed back,

> "The Lord strong and mighty,
> The Lord mighty in battle!"

And then, as the mighty host swept into the city, the cry with its challenge and answer was repeated with the added refrain,

> "The Lord of Hosts—He is the King of Glory!"—

words which constitute the processional at the consecration of our Churches.

The priestly ranks were now organized and divided into classes; trained singers enriched the daily service, chanting the Psalms to the sound of psaltery and harp; while the court was conducted in royal state and the men able to bear arms were trained for military service. But in numbering the people, David sinned against Jehovah, and a pestilence swept over the land for three days. He

was also thwarted in his purpose to build a house unto the Lord, the honor of the undertaking being reserved for the peaceful reign of his son. Meantime, the kingdom was slowly advancing to the dignity of the great empires of the East; and every uprising of bordering nations was promptly settled by an appeal to arms. Moab and Ammon were brought into subjection; Syria was subdued; and the ancient city of Damascus acknowledged allegiance to the great king. But David's heart was not lifted up in pride: on the contrary, he bade his singers chant,

> "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
> But we will remember the name of the Lord our God!"

During the siege of Rabbah, occurred that double crime which is the one dark blot upon the king's life—his impure love for Bathsheba, which led him to criminal conduct toward her and the thrusting of Uriah into the fore-rank of the army to be cut down by the enemy. The king was reproved by Nathan the prophet, who spoke the parable of the poor man and his one ewe lamb; and condemning himself out of his own mouth, the king confessed his guilt and poured out his soul in penitence before God,

> "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned
> And done this evil in Thy sight!"—

part of that wonderful penitential Psalm, which our Church has inserted in her Preparatory Service.

The closing years of David's life were saddened by the rebellion of Absalom, in which the king was driven for a time into exile. The family disputes and disgraces, the plotting for the throne on the part of Adonijah, but above all the sad end of his wayward son, all but broke

the old king's heart as he went to his chamber and cried, "O my son Absalom; my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee!" But order was again established, Solomon was securely set upon the throne, and the greatest king of God's people passed away in peace—"The truest emblem ever given us of a man's moral progress and warfare here below!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LIFE OF SOLOMON.

Solomon's Youth[1]—The Plot of Adonijah[2]—The Prayer for Wisdom[3]—Building the Temple[4]—Its Dedication[5]—The Covenant Renewed[6]—Wealth and Wisdom[7]—Decay and Death[8].

SOLOMON, the favorite son of David, was the beloved child of Bathsheba. But a higher distinction belonged to him than being born "in the purple" and heir of his father's greatness—"The Lord loved him!" It was a beautiful name that his father gave him—Solomon, The Peaceful. A more beautiful name was given him of the Lord—Jedidiah, The Beloved of Jehovah! His early life was spent in Jerusalem. Once for a season he probably shared in his father's flight; but aside from that brief period of exile, he grew up amid the luxuries of court: not indeed with such refinements as pertain to the prince-life of the present time, but with that abundance of good things which was the portion of those who were "clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day."

The rebellion of Absalom had failed; but Adonijah still lived to plot for the throne. He was a young man of striking figure and pleasing address, and by princely

display paved the way to be king. From those in public service, he won two men to his cause—Joab the captain of David's hosts, and Abiathar the priest. These men had been associated with David through all his changes of fortune, and added strength to the cause of the new claimant to the kingdom. To complete the plot, Adonijah prepared a great sacrificial feast, and in the midst of their revellings, his guests pledged themselves to his support and raised the shout, "Long live king Adonijah!" Meantime other powers were at work. Nathan the prophet was the representative of Jehovah among the people; and at his instigation Bathsheba approached the aged monarch and reminded him of his promise respecting Solomon. Startled at the tidings of Adonijah's banquet, the king gave orders that Solomon should at once be publicly anointed and proclaimed king. At the sound of the trumpet and the shout of the people, the conspirators knew they were outwitted, and Adonijah sought refuge in the Tabernacle. For the present he was safe. However, he was soon suspected of new plots, and by the command of the king he was put to death.

Solomon was now firmly settled in his throne. At home, all was order and obedience. To strengthen himself abroad, he married the daughter of Pharaoh. This marriage had its political meaning—it meant that Solomon was the peer of any foreign prince. But in point of fact, it brought neither blessing to him nor benefit to his country. Solomon was a devout man. He loved the Lord and the habitation of His House; and on one occasion he offered a thousand victims upon the brazen altar at Gibeon. On the following night, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and told him to make

request and it would be granted him. He asked wisdom, that he might do justice and judgment in his kingdom. The Lord was pleased with his petition, and promised him not only wisdom, but riches and honor. The wisdom of Solomon was repeatedly put to the test—an instance of it being shown in his judgment between the two women who claimed the same child.

The kingdom was now in a state of peace ; the land was crowned with plenty. Commercial relations were established between Israel and Phœnicia—Phœnicia having her outlet of trade through Israel, and Israel finding a market for her products in Phœnicia. In addition to this, Hiram king of Tyre could furnish Solomon timber for building, and the men skilled to fashion it. A treaty therefore was made—the basis of a life friendship. Solomon now took up the task that became the chief glory of his life—the building of the Temple—a work which the Lord had reserved for him. No body of men was too large, no expense too great, to carry to completion this wonderful enterprise. Timbers of finest quality and stones of largest size were brought together by sea and land ; and these were wrought into the structure by skilled workmen from Phœnice. The real work of the building was begun in the fourth year of Solomon's reign. The site was one marked out by the Lord at the time of the great plague in David's reign—the very mountain, it may be, where Abraham offered up his son Isaac. For seven years, the work went on—the huge stones and timbers being quietly fitted into their places, the walls and beams overlaid with shining gold ; until at last it stood out in all its beauty and grandeur—the noblest structure in all the earth.

After the completion of the Temple, it stood silent and solitary for thirteen years. Meantime other buildings were erected to give completeness to the general design; for the Temple was not only the House of Worship for the nation, but the chapel of court and king. At last, all was ready for its solemn consecration. On the tenth of the month—our September—was the great day of Atonement. On the fifteenth, the Feast of Tabernacles began. In the interval, the Temple was dedicated. First, the Ark was borne from the Tabernacle of David and placed beneath the shadowing wings of the cherubim. Then the choir of Levites broke forth into song to the sound of trumpet and harp, chanting the familiar refrain, "For He is good, for His mercy endureth forever!" And as the thick cloud—the visible presence of Jehovah—filled the sacred place, the joy of the king's heart found expression in thanksgiving that he had been permitted to build a lasting Temple to the Lord. Then turning to the people, he blessed them and spake of the hopes and desires that had finally found their happy fulfilment.

The king then knelt in the presence of the assembled host and lifted up his hands to heaven in prayer. At the end of the solemn supplication, he arose, turned to the people once more and blessed them. At the instant fire fell from heaven upon the sacrifices, while the dark cloud that had filled the Temple was lighted up by the glory of the Lord. And when the multitude saw it, they fell upon their faces and worshiped, joining in the refrain, "For He is good, for His mercy endureth forever!" Then came the feast of dedication, at which 20,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were slain; and this was merged into the Feast of Tabernacles. At the end of

the feast the Lord again revealed Himself to the king, with the assurance that He would keep His promises if Solomon would obey his commandments; but if he should depart from them, God would turn away from him; and the house which he had built would stand as a melancholy monument of his sin and God's vengeance.

The life of Solomon was largely given to public improvement. He crowned the city of David with beautiful palaces and lavished the art of the age upon his Hall of Judgment. He instituted a system of water supply, laid out vast pleasure grounds, fortified the city, and established military posts. As the land of Caanan was adapted to commerce, trade was encouraged with the East and the West, while large fleets swept the sea. Immense revenues thus flowed into the coffers of the king—a single voyage bringing back more than $10,000,000 in gold. In all this, Solomon ever kept in mind his religious duties and graced in person the three great festivals of the Jewish year. His wisdom became proverbial—much of it being contained in the books of the Bible ascribed to his name. His fame reached to the remotest nations—the queen of Sheba traveling from afar through the deserts of Arabia and Syria and laying her richest treasures at his feet.

But earthly glory has an end and the closing years of Solomon's reign marked the beginning of decay. He had gathered about him a household of 1000 women—the most of them heathen; and these filled the land with idolatries. At first the king but tolerated their heathen practices; then he imitated them; and at last, he openly adopted them. Altars were set up on the Mount of Olives and frowned upon the very Temple. To these were added courts and chapels and dwellings

for the priests—the full equipment for heathen worship. Then came the announcement of his doom: his glory should fade; his crown should be cast into the dust; his kingdom should be wrested from his hands. Enemies now arose. Hadad ravaged the Southern frontiers; Rezon seized Damascus and defied him from the North; while internal dissension was beginning its fatal work. And as the clouds lowered and the storm gathered, the night of death was ushered in: and with the death of Solomon; the glory and unity of Israel passed away.

CHAPTER XLIV.

REHOBOAM AND JEROBOAM.

The Kingdom Rent [1]—The Cause of Revolt [2]—The Rival Kingdoms [3]—The Work of Defence [4]—Jerusalem Plundered [5]—Rehoboam's End [6]—Jeroboam Proclaimed King [7]—His Idolatry [8]—The Awful Message [9]—Judgments and Defeat [10]—Strength and Weakness.

IN spite of the glory of Solomon's reign, the seeds of strife had taken root and were destined to ripen into rebellion. Shiloh had been the old religious center and Shechem the civil capital; but David had merged them into one when he scaled the heights of Jebus, built his palace there, and brought thither the Ark of the Lord. The slumbering jealousy of the tribes soon awoke to open strife. Two men became the centers of the opposing factions—REHOBOAM and JEROBOAM. The result was that the kingdom was rent in twain and rival thrones were established.

The immediate cause of revolt was the heavy imposts that had been put upon the people during the reign of Solomon. When Rehoboam succeeded his father in the

throne, Shechem, the ancient gathering place of the tribes, was prudently picked upon for the inaugural. The event was made the occasion of the first step toward open revolt. The rulers of the tribes gathered before the new king, with Jeroboam at their head, and demanded that a part of the burden which his father had put upon them should be removed. In proud defiance, the king replied that his little finger would be thicker than his father's loins; that while his father had chastised them with whips, he would chastise them with scorpions. Then went up that old revolutionary cry, "To your tents, O Israel!" And forthwith the kingdom was disrupted.

The division was unequal as to territory, yet with marked advantages on either side. Rehoboam retained only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; but he held the city with all the stores of the kingdom. Jeroboam had the ten remaining tribes, but lacked alike in prestige and power. The stigma of revolt rested upon Jeroboam, implying a defection from the national religion; and this drove most of the priests and Levites to the standard of Judah. The lack of a great royal city like Jerusalem was a source of weakness to Jeroboam; while the palaces of David and the magnificence of Solomon's Temple, gave Rehoboam the strength of centralization and the advantage of unified forces.

At first, Rehoboam seems to have acted as if he could count on the loyalty of the ten tribes. So he sent an officer to collect the taxes imposed by his father, and if possible bring about a reconciliation; but the people seized the king's messenger and stoned him to death, and the king himself escaped only by mounting his chariot and hastening to Jerusalem. Then Rehoboam

raised a force of 180,000 men in order to subdue the rebel tribes; but "the man of God" warned him against any deed of violence, and he gave up the enterprise. He next turned his attention to strengthening his kingdom, fortifying the chief cities of Judah and Benjamin, and furnishing them with arms. These defences were not made in the North against Israel; but along the South and West, in order to provide against any encroachment on the part of Egypt.

In the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam, the king of Egypt invaded Judea with an immense army. He captured city after city and finally drew up his forces before the gates of Jerusalem. In their straits, the king and his people humbled themselves before Jehovah, who saved them from captivity; but the enemy plundered the king's palace, stripped the Temple of its treasures, carried away the golden shields that Solomon had made, and reduced the kingdom to a tributary of the Egyptian crown. Special importance attaches to this campaign from the fact that the Bible account is confirmed by Egyptian records—the walls of the great temple of Karnak containing inscriptions of the conquest, together with sculptured figures of captives with decidedly Jewish features.

The lesson of defeat was lost upon the king; and the rest of his reign was made up of petty disputes with the rival kingdom. The decline of his rule is figured by the fact that he made shields of brass to take the place of the golden shields of Solomon. His reign was comparatively short—in all, seventeen years. In his rivalry of Israel he ran into idolatry instead of fixing his heart upon Jehovah. But he repented and the wrath of the Lord was turned from him. The weak point of his life

had been to follow the immature judgments of young men instead of the tried wisdom of his father's counsellors. "He slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead."

When the kingdom of Solomon was rent in twain, all Israel came together and made JEROBOAM their king. He was a mighty man of valor and as the trusted servant of Solomon, he had made himself worthy of the confidence of the people. To strengthen his rule on the West, he fortified Shechem, the ancient capital of the nation; at the same time building Penuel as the rallying-point of Israel on the East. His royal residence, however, was fixed at the town of Tirzah, the beautiful. All this was designed to give unity to the ten tribes and corresponding strength to the new kingdom.

One thing threatened to undermine the authority of Jeroboam—Jerusalem was the seat of national worship; and if his subjects were to make stated pilgrimages to the Holy City, they might become estranged from him and be won over to the rival king. To his mind, it would not be enough to establish new centers of worship—the worship itself must differ from that of Judah. So he made two calves of gold, and set one of them up in Bethel and the other in Dan. And then he told the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt"—the very words which Aaron used when he made the golden calf before Sinai. In this way he carried Israel back to the idolatry of Egypt.

To complete their idolatry, Jeroboam appointed priests from the lowest of the people and "ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah"—but following the

devices of his own heart, he placed it a month later than the Feast of Dedication. In the midst of their idolatrous worship, a man of God suddenly confronted the king as he stood before the altar to burn incense. His message was indeed a terrible one—a child should be born to the house of David who should burn the bones of the idolatrous priests upon it; and as a sign of this, the altar should be rent and its ashes poured out. The king put forth his hand from the altar and called upon his guards to seize the prophet; but at the instant his hand was withered, the altar rent, and its ashes poured upon the ground. At the king's entreaty, the prophet prayed unto the Lord and the hand of Jeroboam was restored.

The warning had but little effect upon Jeroboam; for he kept up the idolatrous practices which he had instituted and consecrated priests from all ranks of the people. Then a second judgment fell upon him—even the death of his eldest son and prospective heir to his throne; and along with this, a forecast of the utter overthrow of his house. But his heart was hardened like that of Pharaoh and he rushed recklessly on to his ruin. Engaging in war against Judah, he marshalled an army of 800,000 men—twice the number that Judah was able to put into the field. And yet, in spite of his overwhelming force and the skillful strategy by which he surrounded the opposing army with well-planned ambush, he met with a disastrous defeat; for "there fell down slain of Israel 500,000 chosen men." Jeroboam never recovered from the shock of this terrible defeat—the last sad record of his unfortunate reign. Soon after—three or four years at most—he died and was buried in the sepulchres of his fathers.

Jeroboam held a high rank as a soldier and statesman; but he had no proper conception of Jehovah as the true and living God. His whole religious policy was false and consequently fatal—a weak rival of Judah, with no idea of reverent worship. His name stands in sacred history as a synonym of rebellion against Jehovah; and to it is attached again and again the significant clause, "who made Israel to sin!"

CHAPTER XLV.

THE LIFE OF ELIJAH.

National and Religious Decay[1]—Elijah the Reformer[2]—At Zarephath[3]—Meets Ahab[4]—Prophets of Baal[5]—The Prophet's God[6]—Elijah in Exile[7]—The Still Small Voice[8]—The King's Crime and Doom[9]—Ahaziah's Insult[10]—The Prophet's Answer[11]—His Glorious End[12].

HALF a century had passed away since the rival kingdoms of Judah and Israel were established; and in all these years there was nothing but petty strifes, bitter disputes, with a series of massacres to blot the beginning of each new reign. Golden calves were set up in Israel, priests were chosen from the tribes, and the worship of Baal became the national religion with a strong-minded woman at court to practice it and a cring ing people to follow in her wicked train. And when, here and there, a man stood out boldly for the worship of Jehovah, the wrath of Jezebel burst over his head and drove him into silence or seclusion. But there was one man who would not be silenced or remain concealed —and that was ELIJAH.

Elijah the Tishbite was the great reformer of his age. Scripture describes him as "an hairy man and girt with

a girdle of leather about his loins;" while tradition speaks of him as "a man of short stature and rugged countenance, with the long flowing hair of a Nazarite." Of his origin, we know nothing. All at once he breaks in upon the court, startles the king with his direful message, and forthwith he is gone. The message was from Jehovah, the God of Israel; it told Ahab of a drought that should waste the land. The messenger then escaped to the highlands of Gilead and there, by the sheltering sides of the high cliffs of the brook Cherith, the ravens fed him.

The drought having dried up the stream, Elijah sought refuge far north in the town of Zerephath, where he would at least be safe from the spies of the king. As he drew near the city-gate, he met a woman gathering sticks and recognizing in her the widow to whom he was sent; he called her and said: "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel that I may drink." And to this request he added, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." Then came the promise that neither the oil nor the meal should fail till the rain came again upon the earth. Elijah tarried here for about two years. Meantime, the widow's son fell sick and died; but in answer to the prophet's prayer, he was restored to life.

The destructive effects of the famine extended even to the palace; and the king and his chamberlain were compelled to go forth into the deepest valleys in search of grass to keep alive the royal horses and cattle. In the midst of their search, Elijah suddenly presented himself to the chief officer of the king, who exclaimed in undisguised dread: "Art thou that my lord Elijah!" In reply, the prophet bade him summon the king; and

when Ahab met Elijah, he said: "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Then the prophet charged upon the king the apostacy of the people and challenged him to a final test between Baal and Jehovah.

The scene that then took place on Mount Carmel has no parallel in all history. On one side were ranged the 450 priests of Baal, with the power of the court behind them; on the other, Elijah stood alone; but God was with him. The test was simple: each was to prepare a sacrifice; and the god that answered by fire should be the true God! The prophets of Baal made ready their offering; and from early morn till high noon the cry went up, "O Baal, hear us!" Receiving no answer, they wildly leaped upon their altar and with mad swaying kept up the frenzied cry. As the sun began to sink, Elijah mocked them and said: "Cry aloud; for he is a god!" Stung by the taunt, they cut their flesh with knives, till the blood flowed in streams; and as the sun went down, smeared with their own blood and exhausted by their cries, they stood aside to witness the test of the prophet.

With the confidence of one who knows his God, Elijah repaired the broken altar of the Lord. Then, to make sure against any charge of deception, he poured water again and again over the sacrificial altar until the wood was completely soaked and even the encircling trench was filled. And then, as he turned to God in prayer, that He would manifest His power and bring back His people, fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, licking up the very water in the trench. At the sight, the people fell upon their faces and cried out: "Jehovah, He is the God!" And now, in answer to the prophet's prayer, the rain came and

refreshed the land. And as the cloud, at first no larger than a man's hand spread over the sky, Elijah called upon the king to hasten to Jezreel; and he honored his sovereign by running before his chariot to the very gates of the city.

King and people alike acknowledged Jehovah to be the Lord: not so with the queen and her court-priests. And when she heard from the lips of Ahab that the prophet was victorious and the priests of Baal had been slain, she threatened Elijah with instant death if he did not quit the kingdom. Defeated and disgraced, the prophet sought the wilderness; and as he sat beneath a juniper tree, in a fit of melancholy he prayed that he might die. Overwhelmed with disappointment and overcome with fatigue, he lay down and slept. And as he slept, an angel touched him, bidding him rise and eat. Looking up, he saw a cake baked and a cruse of water; and in the strength of that food he passed forty days and forty nights in The Mount of God.

It was sacred ground that the prophet had reached—the place where Moses had stood before the Lord. But a different manifestation was reserved for Elijah—first the storm of wind, then the earthquake, then fire—all emblems of divine vengeance! But the presence of God was in none of these—the work of reform must be effected by the "still small voice," the Lord speaking comfort and strength and courage to the heart! And as "the sound of gentle stillness" touched the prophet's ear, he drew his mantle about his face, came to the entrance of the cave, and received from the Lord the commission to anoint kings and name his successor.

For a time, Elijah is hid from public view. The king of Israel, no longer restrained by his presence, turned

from the glory of arms to deeds of wickedness—even the shedding of innocent blood. And so, the base intrigue was planned by his wife: Naboth was put to death and his inheritance confiscated by the king. Six years had passed away since Ahab had seen Elijah; but now as he entered the vineyard, secured through judicial murder, he met the prophet face to face, and, conscience-stricken, he cried out, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Then the prophet spoke the word of doom, "In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine!" But the fate of Jezebel should be even worse; for the dogs should eat her beneath the very walls of Jezreel!

With the declaration of Ahab's doom, Elijah again disappeared; and for four years, all trace of him is lost. Meanwhile, many changes took place in Israel. Ahab and Jezebel had each met their terrible end; while Ahaziah, their weak and wicked son, had ascended the throne. His reign, however, was cut short by an accident. And when he sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub instead of Jehovah, he practically proclaimed that there was no God in Israel. This open insult to Jehovah must be reproved. So the word of the Lord came to Elijah, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria." And when the prophet met them, his stern inquiry told the wrath of the Lord and sounded the death knell of the king.

The messengers at once returned to the king; and when they described the man who had dared to speak the word of judgment against him, Ahaziah said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite!" In his rage, he sent a captain with a company of fifty to seize the prophet; but fire came down from heaven and consumed them. A

second detachment met a similar fate. The third captain, however, approached with humble appeal, and was rewarded by the prophet returning with him to the king. Face to face with the weak tyrant, the prophet repeated his reproof and again pronouncing the word of judgment, went his way.

And now, the prophet's earthly mission was ended and the time of his departure was at hand. His life had been great: his end was glorious. From Gilgal he set out at the call of the Lord for Bethel. He wished to make the journey alone; but Elisha insisted upon attending him. When they reached the Jordan, its waters parted at the prophet's touch, and they passed through on dry ground. And as these two servants of God walked together and talked, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah was borne into heaven on the wings of the wind.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE LIFE OF ELISHA.

Elisha's Inaugural[1]—At Jericho[2]—Irreverence Rebuked[3]—Before Kings[4]—The Pot of Oil[5]—The Prophet's Chamber[6]—The Prayer of Faith[7]—The Little Slave-girl[8]—Naaman's Cure[9]—Faithful to the End[10].

ONE man stood out plainly as the choice of God to succeed the aged Elijah—it was ELISHA. Little is known of him aside from his call and the scattered accounts of his ministry; but the incidents connected with his installation mark him at once as a worthy successor to the rugged Elijah who would suddenly rush out from his home in the rocks, break in upon court and king, and shake the lightnings of heaven over each ungodly head. Elisha, on the other hand, was

a man of quiet mood—one to whom the poor and distressed could come with their troubles and wants. The word of Elijah was the hammer to break, the fire to burn, the axe at the root of the tree: the word of Elisha was the gentle dew distilled from heaven, moistening the tender plant—the warm sunshine, wooing each swelling seed into life. He could speak judgment; but he loved mercy.

When Elisha took up the mantle of Elijah, he went down to the Jordan and smote its waters, and as they parted, he passed over on dry ground. And when the sons of the prophets saw it, they said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha!"—and they did him reverence. From the Jordan Elisha went up to Jericho and tarried there several days. There was one great drawback to this beautiful city—its waters had a deadening effect. So the men of Jericho came to Elisha and begged his prophetic interposition. In reply, he asked for a cruse of salt; and bearing it to the spring, he cast in the salt as a symbol of purification, pronounced the healing word in the name of Jehovah; and immediately the waters were healed.

From Jericho, Elisha passed northward to Bethel—one of the centers of calf-worship and the home of the low-caste priests. So the moral and religious tone of the people became corrupted together. At the outskirts of the town was a loitering band of youth—irreverent and ill-respecting. And as the prophet of God appeared, they raised the derisive shout, "Go up, thou bald head!"—an expression full of low contempt alike for the man and his office. Right in the heart of Baal-worship such rude insult could not go unrebuked. So the prophet "turned back and looked on them and cursed them

in the name of Jehovah." At once, the cause became the Lord's and the divine judgment fell upon them: two she-bears came out of the neighboring woods and destroyed forty-two of the mocking rabble.

When Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against Israel and refused to bring his yearly tribute. To suppress the insurrection king Jehoram mustered a large army and called to his aid Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. The king of Edom, a dependent of Judah, also joined the expedition. Marching through the land of Edom, they made a circuit of seven days in the desert—a venture which almost proved disastrous to the allied forces; for there was no water in all that region. In their straits, the three kings presented themselves before Elisha to learn of him the will of the Lord. But when the prophet saw the king of Israel, he turned upon him with the scathing rebuke, "Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and the prophets of thy mother!"—for Israel still worshipped the golden calves set up by Jeroboam. Yet for the sake of the God-fearing Jehoshaphat, the prophet inquired of the Lord and as he listened to the minstrel-song, it was revealed to him that the morning should bring an abundance of water, while victory should wait upon their arms and complete ruin should be the lot of the enemy.

From the terrible slaughter of the people of Moab, with cities razed and fields destroyed, we turn to a distressing scene in humble life. A certain woman—the widow of one of the sons of the prophets—was in sore straits. A creditor of her husband demanded pay; and when she could not satisfy his claim, he pressed the matter to the extreme extent of the law—to hold her sons as bondmen. So she came to Elisha with her trouble; and

when he inquired what she had in store, she told him that there was nothing left but a little oil. Then the prophet told her to borrow vessels from her neighbors—not a few, but many. Having done this, she was to retire within her house and there pour from the pot of oil into the borrowed vessels. And as she did so, the oil increased till all the vessels were filled. In her joy, she returned to the prophet: he told her to sell the oil, pay the debt, and reserve what was left for the maintenance of herself and her sons.

In his travels, Elisha often passed through Shumen. Here lived a woman of great wealth, who, seeing him repeatedly pass by, offered him the hospitality of her home. Assured of his godly character, she suggested to her husband that they should fit up a little chamber on the roof of the house and furnish it for the prophet's use as he journeyed through the place. In return, the prophet proposed her advancement at court; but the woman preferred the quiet and peace of her home. Then Gehazi, the prophet's servant, calling to mind that there was no child in the family, suggested that such a direct gift from God would be the noblest return that could be made. And so, through the prayer of the prophet, she was blest with a son.

A few years later, a cloud of sorrow settled over the happy home of Shumen. The boy—the gracious gift of God—was suddenly taken sick in the field and carried to the house where he soon died. The mother laid him in the prophet's chamber and then, with a servant, hastened to the prophet at Carmel. Casting herself at his feet, she told her grief; so he sent his servant to lay his staff on the face of the child. At the mother's earnest appeal, Elisha accompanied her to her home;

and there, after fervent prayer, he stretched himself upon the child, once and again: the Lord heard his prayer of faith and the child was restored to his mother. Once more she cast herself at his feet—this time with a happy, grateful heart.

After the home-miracles of "death in the pot" and the feeding of the sons of the prophets, came the wonderful cure of Naaman the Syrian. He was a mighty man of valor in the full confidence of his king; but he was a leper. One day, his little Jewish slave-girl expressed the wish that her master might visit the prophet in Samaria, and he would cure him of his leprosy. This report came to the ears of the king; and so he sent Naaman with a letter to the king of Israel. On its receipt, the king of Israel, supposing that it was a pretext for making war, exclaimed in his alarm, "Am I God to kill and make alive!" But when Elisha heard of it, he said, "Let him come now to me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

So Naaman went to the prophet with all the pomp of an eastern prince. But when Elisha told him to go and wash in the Jordan, he turned away in a rage; for the mountain streams of Damascus were surely purer than the sluggish waters of Samaria. However at his servant's appeal, Naaman consented to wash in the Jordan; and as he did so, his flesh came again as the flesh of a little child. Returning to the prophet, he offered him royal gifts; but the prophet refused to accept them. After his departure, however, Gehazi overtook Naaman and craved a gift in his master's name. Aware of his deceit, the prophet took his servant to task for his sin; and as a penalty for coveting Naaman's present, he was cursed with Naaman's disease.

We turn once more to a scene of common life; and the axe-head, lost in the stream, is restored to its owner. But the next move carries us into the midst of strife. The repeated defeat of the Syrians was laid to the charge of Elisha and they surrounded the town of Dothan to capture him; but at his prayer, the entire host was stricken with mental blindness and he led them to Israel's king. Then came the famine in Samaria, for which he was held responsible; but panic seized the Syrian host and the city was blessed with abundance. His closing years were spent in the midst of national troubles. The last record tells how he bade Joash take his bow, open the window towards the East and shoot. The king shot three arrows and then stayed his hand. The prophet upbraided him for not shooting five or six times; for then he would have defeated Syria: now he would gain only three victories, but would not subdue the enemy. Thus to the last Elisha was loyal to his country, true to his office, and faithful to his God!

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE LIFE OF ISAIAH.

The Son of Amoz[1]—His Consecration[2]—His Mission[3]—Before Ahaz[4]—The Word of Prophecy[5]—Encouraging the King[6]—Comforting the King[7]—Rebuking the King[8]—The Gospel-prophet[9].

THE early life of ISAIAH is shrouded in obscurity. It is commonly supposed that he was of no mean origin—in fact, that he could boast of aristocratic or even of royal blood. Be that as it may, his was certainly a royal life. The son of Amoz, he was born during the reign of Uzziah; and for upwards of fifty years, on through the reign of Hezekiah, he filled the

prophetic office. His very name indicates his character —the salvation of Jehovah ; for besides dealing with the questions of the day, he spoke in fullest measure of the coming of the Messiah, who was, pre-eminently, The Salvation of God ! It is mentioned of his wife that she was a prophetess ; while his sons were given names expressive of the father's hope and pride.

Isaiah was a prophet of the highest rank—the prince of prophets. A noble zeal inspired his life. But a nobler principle was infused into his being than mere human enthusiasm ; for when the vision of God's glory was granted him so that he beheld in startling contrast the sinfulness of men, and an angel flew from heaven and touched his lips with a living coal as a mark that his sin was purged away—then at the call of God : "Whom shall I send ?" The prophet replied : "Here am I ; send me !" And with the Spirit of Jehovah inspiring his life, he went forth to preach and prophesy, to comfort and reprove. Here was consecration of the loftiest type—a consecration which involves every relation of life, to God and country ; loyalty as well as religion—a consecration forgetful of self, that his people might be saved.

Those were dangerous times in which Isaiah lived, and they called for a man of great courage in the prophetic field. Israel was in a state of rebellion ; her whole religious system was corrupt : her national life was abominable ; while social conditions kept even pace with the affairs of Church and State ; and the prophet pictures it all in language rich and varied, from startling figure to terrible fact. In the whole range of literature there is nothing more poetic, more realistic than the product of his pen; combining, as it does, the

eloquence of the orator, the exactness of the historian, and the heavenly impulse of the prophet. And when he pictures the pomp of men and the pride of women, dragging them to the very brink of the pit, he points to its fiery depths and says: "Hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, shall descend into it!" And then, sketching the glory of the Lord, His goodness and grace, he gives hope to the remnant that the righteous shall be saved.

The war-cloud spread over the land, and Syria and Samaria united their arms against Judah. It was the sequel to the idolatry of Ahaz. That king of God's people had made molten images to Baal and sacrificed his children to Moloch. In his reign, offerings were made in the high places, on every hill, and under every green tree; but now, as the combined hosts threatened his throne, the Lord in tender pity for His people sent Isaiah to meet the king and give him the assurance of final victory. And though, for a season, destruction stalked through the land—120,000 men being slain and 200,000 women and children carried into captivity—still, by the inspiring words of the prophet, Jerusalem was saved. Then came the promise of THE IMMANUEL, whose very name awakened trust—God With Us! And when Assyria was summoned to the help of Judah, the enemy was swept from the land. In all these struggles for supremacy, the prophet stood as the great center of comfort and encouragement, giving the people the inspiring assurance that a ROD should come out of the stem of Jesse; in his day, righteousness and peace should prevail, and the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea!

The prophet next turns his attention to the kingdoms of the East. Here is where his natural gifts, tempered and toned by the power of inspiration manifest themselves. The touch of fire that sent him forth as a messenger of God, quickens his pulse and guides his pen as he tells of the ravages of war, the fall of empires, and the preservation of a remnant of God's people. But when he takes up the great theme of salvation, he stands forth in all the grandeur of his nature—the embodiment of all that is noble in the moral and intellectual man, picturing the glories of the incoming kingdom of Christ with the sweet fancy of the poet, the convincing force of the debater, and the bright foresight of the seer; while the substance of his whole appeal to the people is: "O, house of Jacob; come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord."

In the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, the king of Assyria came up and threatened the overthrow of his power. In his deep distress, the king humbled himself before the Lord, and sent his servant to the prophet Isaiah, with the word, "This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy." In reply, the prophet assured him that the power of Assyria should be broken, and their king should fall by the sword in his own land. Meantime, the arms or Sennacherib prevailed. In his triumph, he sent a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah; and when Hezekiah had read it, he went up to the house of the Lord and spread it before Jehovah, with the earnest prayer that He would save His people from the hand of the enemy. Then the Lord answered him by the mouth of Isaiah, pledging deliverance and the utter overthrow of the enemy. And the angel of the Lord went forth and slew 180,000 of the Assyrians;

and their king fled to Nineveh, where his own sons smote him with the sword.

Soon after this mighty deliverance, Hezekiah became sick unto death. Isaiah came to him and said, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." It was indeed a solemn message. And when the king heard it, he turned his face to the wall and prayed unto the Lord; and as he prayed, he wept sore. The Lord heard his prayer, and sent Isaiah with the assurance that He had heard his prayer and seen his tears; that He would not only grant him the desire of his heart, but would also deliver him from the hand of the Assyrian king; and that, as a sign of the fulfilment of His promise, He would cause the shadow on the dial to go back ten degrees. Thus Isaiah stood as a messenger between God and the king.

The next message of the prophet was one of severe rebuke. After his recovery, Hezekiah wrote a beautiful song of thanksgiving—a song which speaks so plainly of the cutting off of our days and so confidently of the hope of a revived life, that it is placed as one of the Canticles in the Funeral Service. The people of Judah rejoiced in the lengthening of the king's days. And when the news of his wonderful cure reached the far East, the king of Babylon sent a messenger to him with presents; and in recognition of the honor, Hezekiah showed him all the treasures of his house. But there was more than hospitality in this—there was a touch of pride. And when Isaiah heard from the mouth of the king what he had done, he met him with sharp reproof, telling him that all these treasures should be carried away by the people of Babylon, and his sons should serve in the court of their king.

It was a lofty theme that engaged the pen of the prophet as his swan-song—a message not merely for Israel, but for all men of every age. Isaiah had lived through troublous scenes and shared in the sorrows of his people. In the hour of darkness, he had gone about in the garb of mourning ; yet in it all, he saw the beacon-light of the ages, and was favored with a clear glimpse of the glories of the Christ-kingdom. As the Gospel-prophet, therefore, he announced the mission of John the Baptist, proclaimed with historic exactness the sufferings and death of the Messiah, while a vision even of the New Jerusalem burst upon his quickened view. It was enough. He had studied the lessons of the past; he had lived and acted in the events of the present ; he had warned and encouraged for the issues of the future ; and so, he passed the realm of time out into eternity, where there is neither past nor future, but where all is one eternal NOW!

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH.

Prophet and Priest[1]—His Commission[2]—A Vision[3]—A Prophecy[4]—The Rechabites[5]—The New Scroll[6]—The Potter's Vessel[7]—Darkness and Light[8]—The Yoke and Chains[9]—The Prison-pit[10]—A Captive in Egypt.[11]

IN the life of JEREMIAH is united the office of prophet and priest—priest by birth and prophet by appointment. The book which bears his name, speaks of him as "the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth"—the one "to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah." As the son of a priest, his early life would be spent in the study of the traditions of the elders and the ordinances of the law ; while in his

prophetic sphere, he would become acquainted with the doings of kings and the counsels of their advisors. Thus doubly equipped for the work of life, we look for his active participation in everything pertaining to the religious and political relations of his people.

It was a strange meeting this—the man and the times. He was timid and retiring; distrustful of self and downcast in view of national tendencies; by spells, morose and even melancholy—the Thomas of the prophets! And yet, austere in life, fearless in speech, heroic in act—he was ready to lift up his voice like a trumpet and cry aloud and spare not. The times were, indeed, corrupt. There was tyranny on the throne and treachery among the princes; while gross forms of Baal-worship were fast driving the nation into the vilest depths of heathenism. But the very crisis of things furnished inspiration and opportunity. And when the Lord sent Jeremiah "to root out and to pull down . . . to build and to plant," the man went forth, single-handed, against kings and priests and people—a martyr in his life and, if we may trust tradition, a martyr in his death.

After the call to the prophetic office, we hear nothing of Jeremiah during all the reign of Josiah—the reign which foretokened so much for the reformation of the people. But while some rejoiced in the seeming restoration, the prophet knew from the vision of the seething pot that swift destruction would sweep down upon Judah. He knew something, too, of the hard lot that awaited him—a life of solitude yet unremitting activity, a life filled with reproaches and betrayals and bitter hatreds and murderous attacks. And when the king lost his life in attempting to stay the advance of the

Egyptians, Jeremiah lifted up his voice in lamentation—for a righteous reign was ended, and the outlook was confusion and shame.

When the king is weak, the prophet is strong—there must be ballast or the ship of state would founder. The reign of Jehoahaz was too short for the active participation of the prophet; but when Jehoiakim came to the throne, his real work put on definite form. There were two factions in Judah—the one accepting the rule of Egypt, the other looking to Chaldea for deliverance. As a prophet, Jeremiah knew that the king of Babylon was the servant of God; and accepting the divine will as his only law, he sided with those who sought safety in the Chaldean supremacy. And so, on a solemn feast-day when all the men of Judah had come to the Temple, he stood in the court of the Lord's house with the message that the city should become a curse and the Temple should be desolate. This enraged both priests and people, and they demanded that he should be put to death. But the princes and elders interceded for him, and in view of pending dangers, he escaped.

When Nebuchadnezzar came up against the land, the people took refuge in Jerusalem. Among these, were the Rechabites—descendants of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. The Lord now directed the prophet to summon these people into one of the chambers of the Temple and there give them wine to drink. And when Jeremiah did so, they refused to touch it; for they had received a command from the founder of their tribe that in all their generations, they should never taste wine; and they had sacredly kept their pledge. Then the Lord sent the prophet to His people and rebuked them for the manner in which they had disobeyed His commandments, while

these Rechabites showed such reverence for their founder's rule.

A new order now came to Jeremiah—he was to take a scroll and write all the prophecies that the Lord had ever uttered by his mouth; and these were to be read in the ears of the people. This was done in the following year, when all Judah came up to the Temple to keep a solemn fast. And when the princes brought the roll to the king, he was so enraged at its terrible contents that, when he had read three or four leaves, he cut it up and cast it into the fire. This done, he sent messengers to seize the prophet and his scribe; but they had found a safe hiding-place from his wrath, and by the command of God were preparing a second roll, with the added announcement that the dead body of the king should be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost!

As the time drew near, the prophet got a clearer view of the impending fate. He now saw Chaldea as the arm of God stretching out to smite the nations. The people turned upon him; as if he was the cause of the threatened overthrow, instead of God's messenger to warn against it. They persecuted him; they sought his life; but still he prophesied. In the work of the potter, the Lord gave him a parable of His divine will and might. And then, as a great object lesson of God's power, the prophet took an earthen vessel and standing in the valley of Hinnon, broke it in the sight of the people, and declared that in like manner Jehovah would break them and their city, even as a potter's vessel which cannot be made whole again.

Such boldness on the part of the prophet could not pass without rebuke. Pashur, the priest, smote him

and put him in stocks. Then melancholy seized Jeremiah and he yielded to feelings of despair. False prophets were trusted; but he was rejected as a prophet of evil; and every one cursed him, but still he prophesied, reproving alike king and people, denouncing them for breaking the law of the Sabbath as well as for their open idolatry. Dark indeed was the cloud that was gathering over Judah; but beyond, in the dim distance, there was light: for the Lord would raise up a righteous BRANCH—in his day Judah should be saved and Israel should dwell safely.

The prophetic word was fulfilled and the people were carried into captivity. A new king was set up by Babylon; and while he respected the prophets, he was too weak to protect him from persecution. Even the false prophets in captivity at Babylon spoke of Jeremiah as a madman, and stirred up the priests at Jerusalem against him. The king still cherished hopes of relief from Egypt. Then, by the command of God, the prophet bound himself with chains and put a yoke upon his neck as an emblem of the servitude of Judah. But one of the false prophets took the yoke and broke it, as a sign that the power of Babylon over Judah would as speedily be broken.

The Egyptians advanced upon Judah, while the Chaldeans quietly withdrew. And when Jeremiah planned an escape from the city, his action indicated that he was in league with the Babylonians. He was seized, therefore, and cast into a dungeon; but through the favor of the king, he enjoyed a limited degree of freedom. Again using his privilege, he spoke to the people; but the princes favorable to Egypt thrust him into the prison-pit—deep into the mire—and left him there to

die. From this horrible place he was rescued through the friendship of an Ethiopian and restored to the comparative freedom of the prison-court At last, the long prophesied doom came: the city was taken, the Temple was destroyed, and the captivity became a terrible fact.

As a result, Jeremiah was set free. Then occurred that awful massacre which was designed to include the prophet; but he escaped, only to be carried captive into Egypt. There he uttered sharp warnings and strong rebukes against the idolatries of his people. The few remaining days of his life are wrapt in obscurity. No doubt, he died as he lived—pleading with princes and people, prophesying their overthrow unless they turned from their wicked ways, and persecuted because he told the truth! He had been "a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls" against all iniquity and idolatry; and as a reward from his people whom he loved and for whom he suffered, he lived a martyr life and died a martyr death.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE LIFE OF EZEKIEL.

The Scholar-Prophet[1]—Among the Exiles[2]—The Specific Call[3]—Picture Prophecies[4]—View Prophecies[5]—Parable Prophecies[6]—Before the Elders[7]—Action Prophecies[8]—The Fate of the Nation[9]—The Restoration[10]—Temple and Kingdom Renewed.[11]

THE days were evil. The Holy City had been plundered; her people were in bonds. They had no prophet; for Jeremiah was not in the train of Chaldean captives. But in that far off land of bondage, right from among the shackled tribes, God raised up a man who looked beyond the Babylonian supremacy—

beyond the yoke and the chains, to the coming of the Prince of Peace; and he stayed up the spirits of his fellow-captives with the blessed hope of His righteous reign. That man was EZEKIEL—the scholar-prophet.

Ezekiel was the son of a priest—fitted by education and rank for the prophetic office. A part of the captive train that was driven into Babylonia, he was in the number of exiles that were settled on the banks of a river 200 miles north of Babylon. There he dwelt in the quiet of his own home; until by a sudden stroke of providence, his wife was taken from him—an awful parable for his people. Ezekiel wielded great influence among his fellow-exiles and the elders came to him for counsel; for as prophet and priest, he was the one living witness that God still remembered Zion.

The call of Ezekiel is specific: the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God. These visions were clear and unmistakable, they stood out distinctly and are described with a minuteness that clothes them with a terrible reality—the cloud and fire, the living creatures moving like a flash of lightning. The glory of the Lord being thus revealed to him, then came the commission to go to the children of Israel and rebuke them in their rebellion. This was followed by definite instructions for carrying out his commission, with assurances of God's strength and defence. So the prophet visited his fellow-captives and, seized with a strange astonishment, mingled with them for seven days, waiting for the word of the Lord.

Ezekiel now took up his prophetic task. He sketched upon a tile—a piece of baked clay—the city of Jerusalem under siege, with forts and mounds and battering-rams all about it. This was designed to overthrow the

false hopes of a speedy return from captivity. He was also directed to lie a certain number of days, first on his left side and then on his right, to illustrate the years of God's forbearance and mercy toward Israel and Judah; while the coarse food and limited supply of water was designed to show the straits to which Jerusalem would be reduced in the seige of Nebuchadnezzar. With these and many other signs—great object lessons, equally suggestive—he was to impress the purposes of God upon the minds of the captive race.

In the next stage of his prophetic mission, Ezekiel is carried in a vision to the city of Jerusalem. Here he is shown the idolatries of the people within the very walls of the Temple—their worship of Baal, and their adoption of Egyptian, Phœnician, and Persian superstitions. Next came the order to scatter fire over the city, which was attended by the departure of the glory of the Lord from the Temple—a vivid picture of the utter destruction that should sweep over the city. But at the same time, came the blessed promise of restoration, when the Lord should take away their stony heart and give them a heart of flesh, and they should be His people and He should be their God. And when the vision was ended, the prophet was caught back into captivity; and there he related to the people all that the Lord had revealed to him.

We now reach a third stage of prophecy—the revelation by parable. The vine among the trees is but a useless branch—not even can a pin be made of it to hang a vessel on. It is fit only for the fire and is soon consumed. So shall it be with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Again, the Holy City is like a babe, outcast at its birth—no eye to pity it, no hand to help it. But the

Lord in His love took it up, clothed it with silk and decked it with jewels, until the renown of its beauty went forth to all the nations. And in return for all this loving care, it made itself abominable in the sight of God by becoming enamored of heathen ways and heathen worship. This was followed by the beautiful allegory of the two great eagles with great wings—the king of Babylon and the king of Egypt—which figured the two-fold captivity of Israel and was a reproof for turning from Babylon to Egypt; while the parable of the lion's whelps was a picture of the cruelty and chains that awaited Israel in these rival kingdoms.

About this time, there came an embassy from the elders to inquire of the prophet seeking counsel of God through him in the midst of their increasing calamities. In reply, the prophet sketched God's mercies and their idolatries from the day they left Egypt; but closed with the promise of a return from captivity and a restoration of the Twelve Tribes to the true worship of Jehovah in His Holy Temple. Again, the prophet took up the parable and turning his face toward the south—the direction of Jerusalem—he threatened the forest with a fire that should devour every green tree and every dry tree, the flaming flame should not be quenched. Setting his face a second time toward the south, the Lord revealed to him, under the figure of the drawn sword—a sword sharpened and furbished—the terrible slaughter of the Jews together with the destruction of their city; and closed with severe judgments against Jerusalem and Samaria.

The prophet now returns to the parable of action. The figure of the boiling pot—the terrible recital of particulars—gives a graphic picture of the utter destruction

of Jerusalem. This is followed by a more shocking revelation—one which touched the heart and made desolate the house of the prophet himself; for by a sudden and unforeseen stroke, his wife, with prophetic intent, was snatched away in death. In this overwhelming calamity, he was forbidden to mourn—he was to come and go without the least expression of sorrow. This not only prefigured the sudden shock that should come to Israel in the complete destruction of their city; but also the dumb sorrow that should seize them—a sorrow too deep for tears, too piercing for groans: one that should paralyze the spirit and all but crush out the life. Surely the hour of dire fulfilment is close at hand!

Ezekiel next turns his prophetic eye toward the surrounding nations. Moab and Ammon, Edom and Philistia—each shall suffer for their hatred of God's people: they shall not escape the vengeance of the Lord. Tyre shall fall; and at the sound, the isles shall shake: a pestilence shall sweep over Sidon, while blood shall flow through her streets; but Israel shall be restored. And when the prophet touches upon the conquest of Egypt, his imagery is of thrilling sublimity. Every thought glows with dramatic fire; while the heights to which he soars and the depths to which he leaps, are expressive of the utmost limit of prophetic reach. Human language struggles and strains to give utterance to the terrible thoughts that soon shall have their terrible counterpart in acts.

Jerusalem has been destroyed: Judea must yet be overrun. And when she has been trodden down of the Gentiles, the hope of restoration first sets in. This is figured by the address to the dry bones, while the union of two sticks is an emblem of Israel and Judah joined in one.

But the prophet looks beyond the material interests of his people, even beyond the blessings of the old covenant —on to the coming of the Messiah, the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Meantime, captive Israel shall return; the Temple shall be restored in all its parts, though lacking in its former magnificence. And all this shall be a testimony that the Lord reigns and that the earth shall be filled with His glory.

And now the vision closes with definite instructions for the rebuilding of the Temple and repeopling of the land. This done, the prophet's mission was ended. He had warned his people against their sins; he had comforted them in their captivity; he had stayed them up with the hope of restoration: and now, having outlined the policy that touched upon their political and religious life, he laid town his pen, closed the book, and his prophetic work was done. And in it all rested, not merely the hopes of a restored Israel, but the ushering in of the kingdom of righteousness—the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Ezekiel was indeed the Strength of God—the one girt or strengthened of God!

CHAPTER L.

THE LIFE OF DANIEL.

The Little Exile[1]—Schooled for Court[2]—The King's Dream[3]—Daniel's Interpretation[4]—A New Dream[5]—The Hand-writing on the Wall[6]—The Wicked Plot[7]—In the Lion's Den[8]—Daniel's Closing Days[9]—The Scope of his Prophecies[10].

AMONG the captive Jews that were carried to Babylon, the one who grew up the most renowned was a lad about fourteen years or age. His name was DANIEL. There must have been something remarkable about him, even as a boy; for out of that great host of captives he was one of four specially chosen for royal service. It was no common slave-task which he was appointed to perform, it called for wisdom and knowledge, prudence and skill, with beauty of person and nobility of bearing; and all this to be supplemented by a three years' course of severe training. To meet its demands, the youth entered the royal training-school, where he must learn the Chaldean language and receive that culture which formed an essential part of Chaldean court-life. Himself of royal blood, he was to be royally instructed.

The child is father to the man. It was certainly so in the case of Daniel. Two things at once marked the lad —a spirit of independence and a devout regard for Jewish customs. It was a royal table at which he sat each day; but he purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat nor yet with his wine; but that he would ask for pulse to eat and water to drink. A ten days' test proved that this simple fare was better for him than the rich abundance of the king's table; so it

was continued during all his years of training. And when his schooling was completed, there was none to be compared to Daniel and his fellow captives—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; in matters of wisdom and understanding, they were "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all the realm;" for God gave them knowledge and skill and wisdom.

In the life of Daniel we find both prophetic words and prophet deeds. First comes the historic part—his relations to the king and his fellow captives; then the prophetic—the visions and prophecies which told the rise and fall of empires, the restoration of the Jews, and the advent of the Christ-king. All at once, Daniel is thrown into the midst of the dangers and difficulties of court-life. The king has a dream: it troubled him so he must know its meaning—the king's will is supreme! but he had forgotten his dream; only the pain of it is left. He therefore calls upon his wise men to reproduce it as well as give its interpretation. And when they could not do this—for such things belong to God—the order went forth that every one of them should be put to death. This decree included Daniel and his three Hebrew friends.

When Daniel heard of the sweeping decree, he requested that the king should give him time and he would show him the interpretation. So he called his three friends and enjoined them to pray to God that He would reveal the secret of the king's dream. And it was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the Lord and magnified His name; and after pleading for the lives of the wise men of Babylon, he went before the king with the interpretation. First, he told him that there was a God in heaven who revealeth

secrets; then he recounted the dream concerning the image made of different metals, representing different dynasties; while the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, referred to the universal reign of the Messiah.

After the miraculous deliverance of Daniel's friends from the fiery furnace, the king again acknowledged Jehovah as the most high God. And now he has another dream—the vision of a tree of great height in the midst of the earth. Once more Daniel was summoned; but as the dream was one of judgment against the king himself, he was greatly troubled. However, on receiving the royal assurance, he told the king how his reason would forsake him and he would be driven forth to eat grass like an ox. And then, in his deep love for his master, he said, "Break off thy sins by righteousness and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor." Thus Daniel was not only a prophet of judgment, but also a preacher of repentance.

When Belshazzar made a great feast at which he desecrated the golden vessels that had been taken from the Temple at Jerusalem, there came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote upon the wall of the king's palace. And when the king saw it, his thoughts troubled him. And he sent for his wise men—the astrologers and soothsayers; but they could not interpret the strange hand-writing. Then said the queen, Let Daniel be called; for he is a man of excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding—able to interpret dreams and show hard sentences and dissolve doubts. So Daniel was summoned, and after recounting the mercies of God to Nebuchadnezzar and reproving his royal son—the king on the throne, he showed him how God had num-

bered his kingdom and finished it ; how he was weighed in the balance and found wanting ; and how his kingdom should be divided and given to the Medes and Persians. So Daniel was clothed in scarlet, and had a golden chain put about his neck, and was appointed the third ruler of the kingdom.

When Belshazzar was slain, Darius the Mede became king. He appointed 120 princes over the empire, with three presidents at their head. Of these, Daniel had the first rank. This stirred up bitter jealousy against him, and jealousy blossomed into hate, and hate ripened into bitter plots. And so, at the suggestion of the presidents and governors and princes, the king made a decree that whosoever should ask a petition of any God or man, except of the king himself, he should be cast into the den of lions. Since the king looked upon this as a flattering recognition of his power, and not a secret plot to secure the sentence of death against his most trusted prince, he readily signed the decree ; and once signed even his own power could not annul it.

When Daniel learned of this decree, he went into his house, and at the window of his chamber which opened toward Jerusalem—with no effort at concealment—he kneeled down and gave thanks to God, according to his custom, three times a day. Then his enemies assembled before the king, reminded him of his decree, and asked that it be executed against Daniel. And though the king would gladly have delivered him ; yet because of his decree, he ordered him to be cast to the lions. This done, the king went to his palace and spent the night in fasting. Early in the morning, he hastened to the lions' den, and with a voice full of earnest solicitation, he cried out, "O Daniel, servant of the living God ; is the God

whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" And Daniel said, "O king, live forever!" Then he told the king how the Lord had sent his angel and had shut the lions' mouths, so that they could not hurt him. And then the king had Daniel drawn up from the den; but those who had plotted against him were thrust in with their wives and children, and all were instantly torn to pieces by the ravenous beasts. And then, too, the king made a decree, acknowledging the God of Daniel as the only true and living God; while Daniel himself was restored to his former position of honor.

When the kingdom passed from the hands of Darius the Mede to Cyrus the Persian, Daniel continued to hold the station of honor next to his king. But at this point, history ends and prophecy begins. The last glimpse we get of him is as he stands on the banks of the Tigris, receiving those wonderful visions from the Lord. It is probable that here he spent his closing years; and that here, too, he died. His life had been one of intense activity at court, of firm fidelity to the God of his fathers, and of strict integrity toward his king. He is a noble illustration of the truth that righteousness exalteth not only a nation but also a MAN!

The prophecies of Daniel are marvellous in their scope—taking in at a single sweep not only the return of the Hebrews and their history up to the coming of Christ; but going beyond—the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, the spread of the Messianic kingdom. They go even farther: they reach out into ages yet to come—not that we may cunningly pry into them, but rather find, in the verifications of the

past, that God is faithful to His promises and that no jot or tittle of what He has spoken by the mouths of His prophets shall fail of ultimate fulfillment.

CHAPTER LI.

EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ESTHER.

Ezra[1]—Quitting Captivity[2]—Effecting Reforms[3]—Nehemiah[4]—Building the Walls[5]—Working under Arms[6]—New Reforms[7]—Esther[8]—Made Queen[9]—Haman and Mordecai[10]—The Royal Banquet[11]—Haman Hanged and the Jews Protected.[12]

EZRA was a learned scribe and pious priest of the great captivity. Besides writing the Book that bears his name, he gathered up the Books of the Old Testament and formed them into one volume. Ezra had great power at the Persian court and was placed by the king at the head of the second body of exiles that returned to Jerusalem. Here he instituted great reforms in social and religious customs, and proved the leading spirit in the resettlement of his people. To his time, if not directly to himself, is credited the institution of the synagogue. He is said to have died at 120 years of age and to have been buried at Jerusalem.

It was in the reign of Artaxerxes that Ezra returned to the Holy City, taking with him a company of the Children of Israel, together with priests, Levites, singers, porters, and Temple-servants. He also carried vast treasures of silver and gold—a free-will offering from the court and king as well as from the Babylonian Jews, to beautify the Temple and procure whatever was needed for its service. Meantime, the Temple had been rebuilt, the people settled in the land, and all awaited the arrival of the reformer.

When Ezra beheld the abomination that prevailed—the men of Israel, contrary to the command of God, having married heathen wives—he cast himself in mourning before the Lord and wept for the sins of the people. Then he summoned all Israel to Jerusalem and called upon them to make confession to God and to separate themselves from their strange wives. Following out this order, each man offered as a sacrifice, a ram of the flock for his trespass. Once more the people were assembled—this time to hear from the mouth of Ezra the word of the Law. And when he opened the Book to read it, all the people stood up in worshipful array. And as he blessed the Lord, they lifted up their hands and responded "Amen!"—then bowing their heads, they worshipped with their faces to the ground. Thus this great teacher, sent of God, turned Israel from their iniquity and brought them back to the pure worship of Jehovah. It was the climax of his life—the consummation of his earthly mission.

NEHEMIAH, a man of noble descent, was cupbearer to king Artaxerxes. A rumor came to him of the wretched condition of things in his native land, and he resolved to go to Judea and build up the Holy City. First he laid the matter before God in prayer; then he went to his king. Being appointed governor of the province, he was granted a troop of horsemen as a bodyguard and secured letters from the king to the governors through whose provinces he would pass. So he reached the city of his fathers in safety. Having secretly surveyed the desolation of Jerusalem, he determined at once to repair the walls. Gathering together a mighty band of builders, they strengthened their hands for the work and set themselves heartily to the task. But

enemies arose on every side. Some laughed in scorn; others mocked the Jews and held them up to ridicule. But Nehemiah prayed, and his people labored. So the walls were hurried forward to speedy completion.

When their enemies saw the success of the enterprise, they next conspired to hinder the work by a resort to arms. Then Nehemiah set half the servants to work and appointed half to stand guard; while the builders on the wall wrought with one hand and held their weapons in the other; some, too, were a guard at night while others labored through the day. Then their enemies tried to stop the work by strategy. And when they could not carry out their plan of mischief against the person of Nehemiah, they sent a letter to Artaxerxes stating that the governor was fortifying Jerusalem in order to set himself up as its king.

At this stage, either Nehemiah was recalled or the time granted him had expired, and he returned to court. But after several years, he again went to Jerusalem—this time taking up the work of reform. He cleansed the Temple of its defilements, set the Temple-service in order, reproved the people for the desecration of the Sabbath, and condemned by word and act those who had taken heathen wives. In all, he proved himself an able governor, loyal to his king, zealous for his country, and faithful to his God. He undertook nothing except with prayer for divine guidance; he sought no reward except the favor of Jehovah. For thirty-six years he governed Judea; then, as is commonly supposed, he returned to Persia, where he died.

The story of ESTHER is the most thrilling in all the annals of sacred history. Born in exile, with neither father nor mother to guide her back to Judah when the

days of captivity were ended, she remained in the far East, the charge of her cousin Mordecai, who held office in the household of King Ahasuerus. He cherished her as a daughter, and she returned a daughter's devotion and love.

There was trouble in the king's household and the queen was dismissed from court. Then, on the advice of his servants, the king appointed officers to go through all the provinces and gather together the most beautiful maidens of the land; and from these the king should choose a wife to take the place of the deposed queen. As Esther was a maid of remarkable beauty, she was one of those that were brought to the king's house. Following the instructions of Mordecai, she did not make known her Jewish origin; and as the months of preparation passed by—twelve in all—Mordecai kept careful watch to see what should become of her. At last, her turn came to appear before the king; and when he saw her, he was charmed with her beauty and grace, set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen.

In those days, while Mordecai sat at the king's gate, he overheard two of the court chamberlains planning to assassinate the king. He reported it at once to Queen Esther, and she told the king how Mordecai had discovered the plot. About this time, the king promoted Haman to a rank above all the princes. Moreover, he made a decree that everyone should bow in the presence of Haman; but Mordecai refused to do him reverence. When Haman was informed of this, he was angry, and determined to have revenge upon all the Jews throughout the entire kingdom. So he went to the king and secured a decree that all the subject Jews, both young and old, should be put to death on a certain day.

When Mordecai learned what was done, he put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city and set up a loud and bitter cry. And when Esther heard the cause of his lamentations, she sent word to him that if she should approach the king, it would be at the risk of her life: for no one dared come into the royal presence unsummoned. In reply, Mordecai reminded her that when the decree went out against the Jews, she was included among those condemned to die. Then she directed that he assemble all the Jews of the palace and that they fast day and night; she, too, would fast with her maidens; after which she would go before the king. And then she uttered those words that have given courage to many a sinking soul: "If I perish, I perish!" On the third day, as the king sat upon his throne, Esther, arrayed in royal apparel, presented herself before him. And when he saw her, he held out his golden scepter as a sign of acceptance. At his appeal, she asked that the king and Haman should come to a banquet she had prepared. And as they sat at the feast, he pledged to grant her request, even to the half of his kingdom. Then she asked that the king and Haman should banquet with her on the morrow, and she would then make her petition to the king.

Haman went forth from the banquet with a glad heart and called his friends together and told them of all his riches and honor. "But," said he, "all this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai, the Jew, sitting at the king's gate." Then said his wife: "Let a gallows be made fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak to the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon!" The thing pleased Haman, and he caused the gallows to be made. But on that night the king

could not sleep. So he ordered the chronicle to be read, how that Mordecai had discovered the plot against his life. Then he sent for Haman and commanded him to take royal apparel and one of the king's horses, and present them at once to Mordecai. This done, Haman was summoned to the royal banquet. Then Esther spoke of the decree that had gone out against her people; whereupon the king rose up in wrath and ordered that Haman should be hanged upon the gallows that he had erected for Mordecai. But Mordecai was advanced in honor; queen Esther secured new favor and power, while the people of the Jews were not only saved from slaughter, but they themselves wrought destruction among their enemies. And so, throughout all the generations of the Jews, these two days are kept as a joyous feast.

CHAPTER LII.

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

Hosea [1]—Joel [2]—Amos [3]—Obadiah [4]—Jonah [5]—Micah [6]—Nahum [7]—Habakkuk [8]—Zephaniah [9]—Haggai [10]—Zechariah [11]—Malachi [12].

IT is but proper to close this series of sketches with the Minor Prophets. We call them Minor—not because they are less important than the Major Prophets; but because their writings are so brief. These men hold rank among the Bible writers in view of the prophetic and historical value of their work; the more so since they present a new array of facts—facts which, in the main, have no where else been traced by sacred or secular pen. They therefore fill an important gap in the record of human events. There are twelve of these

Minor Prophets; nine of them wrote before the great captivity; three of them, after the restoration.

HOSEA heads the list—first in time, it may be, of all the prophets. His life was a prophecy; he was a seer in deed as well as in word. He was unsparing in his denunciations of wickedness and idolatry; but he also uttered words of tender mercy. In a very seclusive sense, he was a prophet of his own people. Their sins distressed him; their sufferings awakened his pity; their ultimate triumph filled his heart with joy. Under a strong figure, he pictured the captivity and restoration. He spoke words of judgment against priests and people, calling them to repentance: when they would not repent, he threatened them with captivity; but the day would come when they would turn to God in prayer—then beauty and strength and sweet incense should mark their return.

All that we know of the family history of JOEL is contained in the first verse of the book that bears his name. He was the prophet of Judah as Hosea had been the prophet of Israel. He begins with a double prophecy—the literal interpretation telling of great desolation in the land; the allegorical, warning against the invasions of foreign foes. Then comes the call to keep a solemn fast, with the promise of the favor of God following upon repentance. Joel is sharp in his rebukes, terrible in his threatenings, but rich in the recital of good things that shall flow from mountain and stream for the chosen of the Lord.

AMOS stands third in the list of Minor Prophets. He was not of a prophet-family, nor yet trained for the prophetic office; but the Lord took him as he followed the flock and sent him to prophesy unto Israel. He,

too, holds up to the people their sins, reproves them for their hypocrisy ; but promises mercy to the repentant. The powers that have trod them down shall be broken, the tabernacle of David shall be raised up, and abundance shall crown the land ; and all this shall be but a prophecy of the blessings that shall flow in upon Israel when the reign of the Messiah begins.

As to OBADIAH, it is only a matter of conjecture who he was and when he wrote. He bears a beautiful name; for it means, Worshipper of Jehovah. He may have prophesied much ; but he wrote little—all in one short chapter. His prophecy is directed against the Edomites, whom he denounces for their pride as well as their cruelty to captive Israel ; and then he closes with words of consolation for his people—their triumph over enemies, and above all, their great spiritual triumph when the kingdom shall be the Lord's—whose complete fulfilment looks forward to the end of the ages.

The Book of Jonah is one of action—a history rather than a prophecy. The word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Arise, go to Ninevah !" But instead, he rose up and fled from His presence. Going down to Joppa, he took ship for Tarshish ; but the Lord sent a great storm upon the sea, and in their extremity, the seamen cast lots in order to discover who was the cause of their peril. The lot fell upon JONAH, and, on his petition, he was cast into the sea. But God watched over him, and sent a great fish to swallow him ; and on the third day, as Jonah cried unto the Lord, the fish cast him out upon the shore. Then the Lord said a second time to Jonah, "Arise, go to Ninevah !" So he went to Ninevah and uttered the prophecy, "Yet forty days and Ninevah shall be overthrown !" The people of Ninevah heeded

his message and proclaimed a fast, and God turned his fierce anger from them and preserved them. This displeased Jonah, and in a fit of melancholy he prayed that he might die. Then the Lord taught him by the emblem of the gourd that it was but reasonable for Him to spare Ninevah. It was indeed a gentle reproof to Jonah ; but it was more—it illustrates the great truth that the Lord is good to all, and that His tender mercies are over all His works.

MICAH was a native of the southern borders of Judah, and prophesied during the reign of three of her kings. His writings supplement as well as confirm those of Isaiah; and by threatening judgments and promising mercies, they call upon the people to repent. Besides the terrible forecast of Jerusalem's fate, he enters fully and concisely upon the coming of the Messiah—His human birth-place, His divine generation, and the gathering in of the nations beneath His peaceful sway.

A village of Galilee is credited with being the birth-place of NAHUM. His work of prophecy is set between the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. In it, he directs his denunciations against Ninevah, which has again grown wicked since it heeded the preaching of Jonah ; while along with it goes a corresponding degree of comfort to his countrymen, whose lands had so often been ravaged by this relentless foe. The startling language with which he pictures the desolation of that fated city, stands in striking contrast to the tender mercies of God toward His repentant people.

We know nothing either of the tribe or birth-place of HABAKKUK. As a writer of prophecies, his style is peculiar. It is a dialogue between the prophet and God. He begins with an acknowledgment of his peo-

ple's iniquity and a plea for their deliverance. In answer, God promises more than human deliverance—even the coming of the KING, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And then, he closes with a prayer in which he trembles at the majesty of God, but rejoices in Him as his Strength and Salvation.

ZEPHANIAH was "the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah." He lived in the days of Josiah, king of Judah. In his prophecy, he takes up the old theme—denunciations for idolatry, and repentance as the only means of turning aside the vengeance of God. He also prophesies against the surrounding nations, foretells the Babylonian captivity, and holds out the hope of final restoration. He is sharp in his rebukes; but he closes with a song of rejoicing upon his lips, for he has the happy assurance that God is in the midst of Israel.

The Jews had gone into captivity. On their release, they returned to Jerusalem and began to rebuild the Temple. But after repeated interruptions, they gave up the work and turned to the task of building their own houses. Then the Lord raised up HAGGAI, the prophet. He reproved the people for their delay, encouraged them to undertake the work by the promise of divine assistance, and assured them that the glory of the second Temple should be greater than that of the first—a promise which was fulfilled when Jesus entered the Temple and taught the people.

ZECHARIAH was one of the captives that returned to Jerusalem when Cyrus set them free. With true prophetic spirit, he warned them against a repetition of the sins that drove them into exile, and encouraged them in

their effort to rebuild the Temple. By a series of visions, he set before them the glory of Christ's kingdom, their success in rebuilding the Temple, and the danger of a second captivity if they should a second time fall into sin. Then looking out into the far distant future, he uttered prophetic words touching the coming of Christ—words that are startling in the exactness of their fulfillment.

After the Jews had rebuilt the Temple and restored the worship of Jehovah, they again lapsed into irreligion and irreverence. Then arose MALACHI with words of strong reproof, threatening them with rejection and announcing the call of the Gentiles. In particular, he censured the priests for profaning the Temple-service. And now, as the Book of Prophecy was about to close, to be opened after the lapse of centuries as the Book of Fulfillment, Malachi spoke the more plainly of the coming of the Messiah, and enjoined the strict observance of the Law, that the people might be the better prepared to receive the Gospel. And then he ended the Old Book with the herald-announcement of the forerunner of the CHRIST.

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QUESTIONS.

CHAPTER I.—1. Who were the parents of John the Baptist? 2. What was their character? 3. What cloud rested over their home? 4. To what city did Zacharias' official duties call him? 5. What happened there? 6. What strange thing occurred at the naming of John? 7. What is the Benedictus? 8. Describe the life of the Nazarite. 9. When did John appear as a preacher? 10. What was the theme of his preaching? 11. Whom did he baptize? 12. Why was he imprisoned? 13. Where was he imprisoned? 14. How was he put to death? 15. What was the nature of his office?

CHAPTER II.—1. Where did Joseph and Mary live? 2. What was Joseph's trade? 3. What is the betrothal? 4. Who was Elizabeth? 5. What is the Magnificat? 6. What was the Jewish custom in taking the census? 7. Why was Joseph compelled to go to Bethlehem? 8. What great event occurred at Bethlehem? 9. To whom was the Birth of Jesus first announced? 10. What is the Gloria in Excelsis? 11. How old was Jesus when He was circumcised? 12. How old when He was presented in the Temple? 13. What is the origin of the Nunc Dimittis? 14. To whom was the Christ-child next made manifest? 15. What season of the Church Year is named from this event? 16. How did the report that a king was born affect Herod? 17. How was Herod's wicked design frustrated? 18. What occurred when Jesus was twelve years old?

CHAPTER III.—1. How many years had the Book of Prophecy been closed? 2. Who then appeared as a prophet? 3. How was the Triune God openly manifested at Jesus' Baptism? 4. How old was Jesus when He began His ministry? 5. How many forms of the Temptation were there? 6. To what did they appeal? 7. To what do they correspond? 8. What was John's testimony concerning Christ? 9. What is the Agnus Dei? 10. Who were the first disciples? 11. What does Nathanael's answer tell us of Christ's nature? 12. What does the name that Jesus gives Him

self tell us of His nature? 13. What was the first miracle? 14. What does it teach us? 15. What did it teach the disciples? 16. What lesson do we learn from the cleansing of the Temple? 17. What five fundamental truths did Jesus teach Nicodemus? 18. Who were the Samaritans? 19. What great lesson did Jesus teach at Jacob's well?

CHAPTER IV.—1. What is the key-note of true preaching? 2. When Jesus cured men's bodies, what else did He do? 3. Where did Jesus openly proclaim Himself as the Messiah? 4. What effect did it have upon His hearers? 5. Where did He now make His home? 6. Whom did He now call to discipleship? 7. What effect did the draught of fishes have upon them? 8. How were demons affected by Christ's presence? 9. What did the people say? 10. What is peculiar about the cure of Simon's wife's mother? 11. Why should Jesus pray? 12. What was the office of the publican? 13. What occurred at the Pool of Bethesda? 14. How did Jesus defend His disciples against the charge of Sabbath breaking? 15. What did He declare as His own right? 16. How did He defend His right to heal on the Sabbath? 17. How did He rebuke His enemies? 18. What effect had this miracle upon them?

CHAPTER V.—1. What new period in Christ's ministry have we now reached? 2. How many groups of disciples are there? 3. Name them according to groups. 4. Outline the Sermon on the Mount. 5. Where does our church use the Beatitudes? 6. How does she emphasize The Lord's Prayer? 7. What is a centurion? 8. How did this centurion show his great faith in Jesus? 9. How many recorded instances are there of Christ raising people from the dead? 10. How did Jesus reply to John's message? 11. How apply the parable of the Two Debtors to the Pharisee and the sinful woman? 12. What expectation did the cure of the demoniac raise in the people? 13. How did the Pharisees account for the cure? 14. How did Jesus answer their charge? 15. What is a parable? 16. What is the difference between a parable and a fable? 17. What did the power of Christ's Word do for these demoniacs? 18. What will it do for us? 19. What two great miracles did Jesus now perform? 20. Give full account of each? 21. Why did the people of Nazareth reject Jesus? 22. What commission is now given to the Twelve?

CHAPTER VI.—1. Why did Jesus withdraw to the desert? 2. Did He carry out His purpose? 3. Give full account of the miracle He performed. 4. Had Peter too much boldness or too little faith? 5. In what sense is Christ the Bread of Life? 6. Why did people turn away from Him? 7. Is the sin of the Pharisees in putting traditions above Revealed Truth, peculiar to them? 8. What in particular marks this woman's faith? 9. What is Peter's confession? 10. Describe the scene of Transfiguration? 11. What significance is there in the presence of Moses and Elias? 12. Why could not the disciples drive out this demon? 13. What is the Christian rule for rank? 14. For forgiveness? 15. What part did Jesus take in the Feast of Tabernacles? 16. Why did the officers not arrest Jesus? 17. Why did the Jews take up stones to stone Him? 18. What is the chief point in the argument of the blind man in defense of Jesus? 19. What kind of spirit did James and John manifest? 20. What is the test of discipleship? 21. In what should we rejoice above all else?

CHAPTER VII.—1. What district did Jesus now enter? 2. What is the law of the Christian's life? 3. How does it manifest itself? 4. What doctrine is emphasized by Jesus blessing little children? 5. What lesson does the parable of The Rich Fool teach us? 6. What did the Feast of Dedication commemorate? 7. What differences in the character of Mary and Martha? 8. When Jesus claimed to be the Christ, what did the people do? 9. In what place were they still willing to listen to His teaching? 10. What does Jesus teach about the Sabbath? 11. What difference between His parables to the rulers and those to the common people? 12. Give full account of the raising of Lazarus? 13. What sad truth does the cleansing of the Ten Lepers teach us? 14. Apply the parable of the Pharisee and Publican. 15. The Laborers in the Vineyard. 16. What is the origin of the Kyrie? 17. Its use in the Church? 18. Draw lesson from Zachaeus. 19. What beautiful memorial at Bethany? 20. Why did Judas murmur? 21. Why did the Jews want to put Lazarus to death?

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answer them? 10. What parables did He utter? 11. Apply them. 12. What questions were now asked Him? 13. How is David's Son also David's Lord? 14. What lessons may we learn from the widow's gift? 15. Relate and apply the parable of The Ten Virgins. 16. Of the Talents. 17. What did Jesus do on the following day? 18. What did His enemies probably do? 19. Describe the preparation for the Paschal Feast. 20. How did Jesus teach the disciples the lesson of humility? 21. What happened during the Feast? 22. Describe the scene in the Garden.

CHAPTER IX.—1. Who was Annas? What his character? 2. Who was Caiaphas? 3. Give account of Peter's denial. 4. What false witness was brought against Jesus? 5. How did the High-priest try to have Jesus convict Himself? 6. What sentence did he pronounce? 7. What occurred between the close of the trial and the morning. 8. Why could the Jewish Council not carry out the sentence of death? 9. What conclusion did Pilate reach? 10. Why did he send Jesus to Herod? 11. How did Herod's men treat Him? 12. What led Pilate to seek Jesus' release? 13. What judgment did the Jews call down upon themselves? 14. In what cruel sport did the soldiers of Pilate engage? 15. What became of Judas? 16. What was the Roman custom in the case of those condemned to be crucified? 17. Describe the scene of crucifixion. 18. What were "The Seven Words?" 19. Describe the death and burial. 20. What precaution was taken so that the disciples could not remove the body? 21. Give the account of the resurrection. 22. To whom did Jesus first show Himself? 23. How many appearances were there? 24. Give brief statement of the Ascension.

CHAPTER X.—1. What was the custom with Jewish women? 2. How is this custom shown in the life of Christ? 3. Why, in particular, did they follow Jesus? 4. Sketch the leading points in the life of the Virgin Mary up to Jesus' baptism. 5. From that time till the crucifixion. 6. Is she mentioned among those who saw Jesus after the resurrection? 7. What is the last record we have of her? 8. Who is Mary Magdalene? 9. What instance have we of her devotion to Jesus? 10. What honor was accorded her? 11. Who was Mary, the mother of James and Joses? 12. How many of her sons were disciples? 13. Where does she figure in our Lord's life? 14. What is the last glimpse we get of her? 15. Who was Salome? 16. What strange request did she make of Jesus? 17.

What was her last act of loving devotion? 18. What difference between the dispositions of Mary and Martha? 19. How was this shown in the home? 20. At the death of their brother? 21. At Simon's house? 22. Who is Joanna? 23. What her social standing? 24. What presumingly made her a follower of Christ? 25. Who is Susanna? 26. What of the many women whose names are not mentioned in Scripture?"

CHAPTER XI.—1. How does Peter rank among the Twelve? 2. Where does his name always stand? 3. Whose name always comes last? 4. What did the disciples do after the Ascension? 5. What proposition did Peter make? 6. Who was chosen in Judas' place? 7. What was the day of Pentecost in the Jewish Church? 8. What, in the Christian Church? 9. How did some account for the conduct of the disciples? 10. How did Peter answer this charge? 11. What two great essentials did Peter urge? 12. What is significant about the name "Simon Peter?" 13. What miracle did Peter now perform? 14. With what direct effect? 15. What occurred later? 16. What did some of the disciples do with their property? 17. Should we do the same to-day? 18. What is Simony? 19. What miracles did Peter next perform? 20. What inference is drawn from the fact that Peter lodged with a tanner? 21. What did the conversion of Cornelius teach Peter? 22. What did Herod now do? 23. How did Peter escape his hands? 24. What now shows the greatness of Peter? 25. What, his weakness? 26. What is known of Peter's later life? 27. What, of his death?

CHAPTER XII.—1. Who was James? 2. What request had his mother made for him? 3. What was his rank among the Apostles? 4. What is the meaning of the word "Boanerges?" 5. What shows the fitness of the name? 6. After the crucifixion, when is James next mentioned? 7. In what sense did he drink of Christ's cup? 8. Who was the first Christian martyr? 9. Who the second? 10. With whose name is that of John now linked? 11. Where did John live? 12. Where was he on the Day of Pentecost? 13. In what way did the disciples keep the Jewish customs? 14. What miracle did Peter and John preform? 15. With what result? 16. What effect had persecutions? 17. What did Peter and John do in Samaria? 18. What is the last direct mention made of John in Scripture? 19. When did John probably leave Jerusalem? 20. Where did he then make his home? 21. What place did Ephesus fill in the Christian Church? 22. What was John's

relation to the Churches in Asia Minor? 23. To what place was John banished? 24. What marks the spot where he was supposed to receive The Revelation? 25. What was his influence upon the Church? 26. What Books of the Bible did he write?

CHAPTER XIII.—1. How extended a notice have we of the remaining Apostles? 2. Who was Andrew? 3. What acknowledgment did he make? 4. What did he do? 5. Why do some suppose that he was a Greek? 6. What incident do you recall of his disciple life? 7. What is said of his later life and death? 8. Who was Philip? 9. Where from? 10. What special distinction belongs to him? 11. What notable confession did he make? 12. What shows his weakness of faith? 13. What his childlike simplicity? 14. What prejudice had Nathanael? 15. Where was he from? 16. What was his noble confession? 17. What other name did he have? 18. How, according to tradition, did he die? 19. What was the occupation of Matthew? 20. What is the chief event in his disciple life? 21. What has he given us? 22. What was the character of Thomas? 23. What three events show this? 24. Who was James? 25. What do we know of him? 26. Who was Judas? 27. What shows his ideas of Christ's kingdom? 28. Who was Simon? 29. What is misleading about his name? 30. What can you tell of the life and death of Judas Iscariot?

CHAPTER XIV.—1. What difficulty arose in the infant Church? 2. How was it met? 3. How is Stephen described? 4. What broad view did he take of Christianity? 5. With whom did he dispute? 6. What did they charge against him? 7. What effect did his answer have upon the Jewish Council? 8. What vision did he have? 9. What did his judges do? 10. What was the punishment for blasphemy? 11. What was the custom in executing it? 12. Who was the great leader against him? 13. How did Stephen meet death? 14. By what beautiful figure is his death represented? 15. What rank does Philip hold? 16. To what work did he specially turn? 17. Where did he go? Under what circumstances? 18. What success marked his ministry? 19. In his work, what relation did he bear to St. Paul? 20. What are the two leading incidents of his life? 21. Where did he spend his later life? 22. What of his family? 23. What do we know of the remaining deacons?

CHAPTER XV.—1. Where was Paul born? 2. What of its natural surroundings? 3. What constituted its trade? 4. Its government?

5. Its educational advantages? 6. From what tribe did Paul descend? 7. What of his father's religion? 8. What were the influences at Tarsus? 9. How did Paul become a Roman citizen? 10. What were his names? 11. For what calling was Paul destined? 12. What trade did he learn? 13. How is his person described? 14. Why is it supposed that he studied at Tarsus? 15. Who was his teacher at Jerusalem? 16. To what sect of Jews did Paul belong? 17. What was his religious aim? 18. Of whom does he remind us? 19. How did his zeal make him a persecutor?

CHAPTER XVI.—1. Why was the new faith not suited to the old forms? 2. What difference between the Hellenists and the Palestinian Jews? 3. Who was Stephen and what had Paul to do with his death? 4. What power is given to Paul? 5. Where did he now go and with what purpose? 6. What happened him on the way to Damascus? 7. Give full account of his conversion and baptism. 8. What did Paul do after his baptism? 9. Where did he spend three years and amid what historic scenes? 10. How was Paul received on his return to Damascus? 11. How did he escape? 12. Where did he now go? 13. How was he received at Jerusalem? 14. Who took special interest in him? 15. How long did he remain at Jerusalem? 16. What plot was there against him? 17. Who of the Gentiles first received the Gospel? 18. What city, in particular, had many Gentile converts? 19. What effect had this upon the Church at Jerusalem? 20. Who was sent to Antioch and what his character? 21. Whom did he call to his assistance? 22. What was predicted by Agabus? 23. What did the Christians at Antioch do? 24. What persecution now arose?

CHAPTER XVII.—1. What were the fruits of preaching at Antioch? 2. How were Paul and Barnabas set apart for mission work? 3. Whom did they take with them? 4. Where did they first land? 5. Where did they now preach the Gospel? 6. Where is Paphos? 7. What happened at that place? 8. What place did Paul next visit? 9. What did he preach about? 10. With what effect? 11. What event turned him to the Gentiles? 12. How did the Jews interfere with his work? 13. Where did he next go? 14. With what was he threatened? 15. What miracle did he perform? 16. What effect did it have upon the heathen? 17. What treatment did he next receive from them? 18. What was the last point at which Paul preached on this journey? 19. By what

short road might he have returned? 20. What way did he take? 21. Where had he preached the Gospel? 22. What trouble now arose in the Church at Antioch? 23. How was it settled? 24. With what result?

CHAPTER XVIII.—1. From what point did Paul's second missionary journey begin? 2. What difficulty did he have with Barnabas? 3. With what result? 4. Where did Barnabas go? 5. What route did Paul take? 6. Who joined him at Lystra? 7. At what point did his round of visitation close? 8. What territory did he now enter? 9. Who were the Galatians? 10. What effect did Paul's preaching have upon them? 11. What direction did he now take? 12. What notable event took place at Nice? 13. Where did Luke join Paul? 14. Who was Luke? 15. What city in Europe did Paul now visit? 16. What happened there? 17. Where did Paul next go? 18. How did the Jews treat him? 19. How was he received at Berea? 20. What great city did Paul next visit? 21. For what was it noted? 22. How was his preaching received? 23. Where next did he go? 24. Whom did he meet there? 25. What protection did he enjoy? 26. Describe the return trip. 27. Where had he preached? 28. Where planted churches?

CHAPTER XIX.—1. How did Paul begin his third missionary journey? 2. Who were his companions? 3. For what was Ephesus noted? 4. What remarkable experiences did Paul have there with false prophets? 5. What with the shrine-makers? 6. Where did he next go? 7. What places did he now visit? 8. What great letter did he write? 9. What interfered with his direct return to Antioch? 10. What course did he take? 11. Who were his companions? 12. What happened at Troas? 13. Describe Paul's trip till he reached Miletus. 14. What touching scene at Miletus? 15. Where did the Apostle go next? 16. Describe his parting with the Christians of Tyre. 17. On reaching Cæsarea, at whose home did he stop? 18. What warning did he here receive? 19. Did it interfere with his journey to Jerusalem? 20. Through what provinces had his ministry extended?

CHAPTER XX.—1. Why did the unbelieving Jews hate Paul? 2. Why did the Christian Jews distrust him? 3. What was he prevailed upon to do? 4. What was the cause of the tumult? 5. The result? 6. What was Paul's defence? 7. How did he escape the scourge? 8. What took place before the Jewish Council? 9.

What plot was discovered against Paul? 10. How did he escape? 11. What charge was brought against Paul at Cæsarea? 12. What effect did Paul's appeal have upon Felix? 13. Who was the new Governor? 14. What plan did the Jews now have for killing Paul? 15. What was Paul's appeal? 16. Outline Paul's speech before Agrippa. 17. What was Agrippa's exclamation? 18. How did Paul meet it? 19. How did Agrippa evade his searching question? 20. How was Paul sent to Rome? 21. Describe the journey. 22. At what Roman port did he land? 23. How did the Christians receive him? 24. How did the Jews treat him? 25. How did he suffer death?

CHAPTER XXI.—1. Who was Mark? 2. What two things is he noted for? 3. What was his relation to Peter? 4. What kin was he to Barnabas? 5. What part did he take in missionary work? 6. What dispute arose over him? 7. What relation did he afterward sustain toward Paul? 8. What tradition is there about him? 9. By what special title is Luke known? 10. What two books did he write? 11. Where was he born? 12. Where did he join Paul? 13. How long did he probably preach at Philippi? 14. What journey did he take with Paul? 15. What tradition about his later life? 16. Who was Barnabas? 17. What act of self-denial did he perform? 18. What favor did he show Paul? 19. On what great mission was he sent? 20. What is the last Scripture mention made of him? 21. What tradition about his later labors? 22. Who was Timothy? 23. What is said of his mother and grandmother? 24. What part did he take in missionary work? 25. What is the tradition about his closing days? 26. Give account of the life of Titus. 27. Of Dorcas. 28. Of Lydia.

CHAPTER XXII.—1. How old is the human race? 2. What of the Book which contains the great world-records? 3. What does the word "Adam" mean? 4. How was his creation nobler than that of mere animals? 5. Where did God place Adam? 6. What relation did the things God created sustain to Adam? 7. What was withheld from Adam, and why? 8. How were the animals named? 9. What was needed to complete Adam's happiness? 10. How did God create a helpmeet for him? 11. What does this teach us with respect to marriage? 12. Describe the fall? 13. What knowledge did they gain through it? 14. What doom did God pronounce? 15. What became of Adam and Eve how? 16. Why was the Tree of Life guarded? 17. What does Cain's

name imply? 18. Abel's? 19. What was their occupation? 20. What was lacking in Cain's sacrifice? 21. What was implied in Abel's? 22. What great crime did Cain now commit? 23. How did the Lord regard his crime? 24. What was his punishment? 25. What more did God show him? 26. Where did Cain now go? 27. What of his descendants?

CHAPTER XXIII.—1. What place does Seth occupy in the new race? 2. Trace his descendants till the flood. 3. What was the moral condition of men at that time? 4. Who was Noah? 5. What two families intermarried? 6. With what effect? 7. Describe Noah morally. 8. What command did he receive? 9. Give account of the building of the ark. 10. Give account of the flood. 11. The effect of the flood. 12. Wher did the ark rest? 13. What tests did Noah make? 14. On leav g the ark, what was his first act? 15. What covenant did the ord make? 16. What disgrace blotted Noah's life? 17. What did his descendants do? 18. Where was the tower of Babel? 19. How did the Lord stop the work? 20. Where did Shem's descendants dwell? 21. Japheth's? 22. Ham's?

CHAPTER XXIV.—1. Who was Terah, and where did he live? 2. What of Abram's early life? 3. Where did the family first settle? 4. What rank did Abram hold after his father's death? 5. What new call came to Abram? 6. What did it involve? 7. What was the promise? 8. What land did he finally reach? 9. Describe its location? 10. What was the first halting-place? 11. What marks his religious life? 12. What sent him into Egypt? 13. What danger did he meet there? 14. What of Abram's wealth? 15. On reaching his old tenting-ground, what did he do? 16. What new trouble arose? 17. What promise now came to him? 18. Describe the first battle recorded in the Bible. 19. Who was Melchizedek? 20. What was the burden of Abram's prayers? 21. Describe the way in which the new covenant was sealed.

CHAPTER XXV.—1. What custom prevailed as to plural marriages? 2. What was the object of Abram taking a slave-wife? 3. Why did Hager flee into the wilderness? 4. What was God's demand of Abram? 5. What change of name and with what meaning? 6. What Old Testament rite was instituted? 7. Describe the visit of the angels. 8. What was the special message? 9. Give full account of Abraham's pleading for Sodom. 10. Tell

of the mysterious visit to Lot. 11. What of Lot's rescue? Of Lot's wife? 12. Where did Abraham now settle? 13. What device did he adopt? 14. What of Abimelech's dream? 15. When was the promise fulfilled? 16. How did this effect Ishmael? 17. What became of him? 18. What of God's protecting care? 19. What treaty did Abraham make with Abimelech? 20. Give full account of the offering of Isaac. 21. What of Sarah's death? Of Abraham's?

CHAPTER XXVI.—1. What effect may the life of a great man have upon his son? 2. What had been the nature of Abraham's life? 3. What that of Isaac? 4. Give leading events of Isaac's early life. 5. In matters of marriage, what was the duty of an eastern father? 6. What kind of a wife should Isaac have? 7. Where was such a one to be sought? 8. Where was Eliezer sent? 9. What sign did he seek? 10. What was implied in it? 11. How did the test result? 12. Who went out to meet Eliezer? 13. Relate the occurrences at Laban's house. 14. How did Rebecca greet Isaac? 15. Who were the sons of Isaac? 16. What the difference in disposition? 17. What was the birthright? 18. How did Esau despise it? 19. What deceit did Isaac practice at Gerar? 20. With what results? 21. Give account of Jacob supplanting Esau. 22. What of Esau's lament? 23. What of Isaac's death and burial?

CHAPTER XXVII.—1. What is the chief feature of Jacob's life? 2. Why was he sent from home? 3. Where did he go? 4. What happened the first night? 5. What name did he give to the place? 6. What took place when Jacob reached Haran? 7. What bargain did he make with his uncle? 8. How did his uncle deceive him? 9. How many years did he serve for his wives? 10 How many children were born to him during these years? 11. What new bargain did he make with Laban? 12. How many years did he still serve Laban? 13. In leaving, what course did he take? 14. What did Laban do? 15. What occurred when Laban overtook him? 16. What assurance did Jacob have of God's protection? 17. What new danger confronted him? 18. How did he meet it? 19. Give account of his wrestling with the Angel. 20. How did the brothers meet? 21. What was the outcome of their meeting? 22. What happened as he returned to his father's house?

CHAPTER XXVIII.—1. What great difference between the life of Abraham and Jacob? 2. What rank does the life of Joseph hold?

3. How did the father show his preference for Joseph? 4. With what effect? 5. Relate the dreams of Joseph. 6. How were they fulfilled? 7. Where were the sons of Jacob? 8. Why was he so anxious about them? 9. What did they do with Joseph? 10. What was Reuben's plea? 11. To whom did they sell him? 12. Of what was this a type? 13. How did the loss of Joseph affect Jacob? 14. What was done with him in Egypt? 15. What effect did his presence have on his master's prosperity? 16. Upon what principle did he refrain from evil? 17. What two dreams did he interpret? 18. With what effect? 19. What dreams did Pharaoh have? 20. Who interpreted them? 21. How did the king reward Joseph?

CHAPTER XXIX.—1. What plan did Joseph adopt for getting grain? 2. What of its distribution among the people? 3. When their money was all gone, what did they do? 4. What law was established? 5. Who in particular was affected by the famine? 6. Which of his sons did Jacob send into Egypt? 7. How did they fulfil Joseph's dreams? 8. What did Joseph do? 9. What device did he adopt as a pretext to seize them? 10. What effect did his treatment have upon his brethren? 11. How did Jacob receive their report? 12. What did Jacob do to appease Egypt's lord? 13. How did Joseph treat them? 14. What happened shortly after they started for home? 15. What affecting scene occurred on their return to the city? 16. What plan did Joseph adopt for his father's household? 17. Describe the meeting of Pharaoh and Jacob. 18. How long did Jacob live in Egypt? 19. What oath did he exact from Joseph? 20. Give account of Jacob blessing Joseph's sons. 21. What blessing did he pronounce upon his own sons? 22. Describe the burial of Jacob. 23. Tell of the complete reconciliation of the brethren. 24. What is implied in Joseph's last request? 25. What lessons does the life of Joseph teach us respecting God's protecting care?

CHAPTER XXX.—1. Name the events that link Israel with Egypt. 2. How many were the years of bondage? 3. What purpose did Pharaoh form? 4. What cruel plan did he adopt? 5. With what effect? 6. What was the law when Moses was born? 7. How was he saved? 8. How was he reared? 9. What led him to flee from Egypt? 10. Where did he go? 11. Who was Jethro? 12. How long did Moses live in Midian? 13. How did God approach him? 14. What did He declare as His purpose? 15.

What did He promise? 16. By what name did he make Himself known? 17. What signs did He give Moses? 18. What office was Aaron to fill? 19. What demand did they make of Pharaoh? 20. With what effect? 21. Name the Plagues? 22. How were the first-born of Israel saved? 23. Of what was this a symbol? 24. Describe the flight; the pursuit; crossing the sea.

CHAPTER XXXI.—1. In beginning their march, what chief difficulty did Israel meet? 2. How were the waters of Marah made sweet? 3. What is the spiritual import of this incident? 4. How did the Lord provide food? 5. What enemy did they encounter? 6. With what effect? 7. How was water now supplied? 8. Who commanded the armies? 9. What did Moses do? 10. What lesson does the part of Aaron and Hur teach us? 11. Describe the scene at Sinai. 12. How long was Moses in the Mount? 13. What happened during his absence? 14. How did he reprove the idolatry of the people? 15. Where was the tent of meeting taken? 16. What solemn service was observed? 17. How far were they from Canaan? 18. What plague came upon them? 19. Give account of the spies. 20. Name the chief incidents of the wanderings of Israel. 21. What mountain do they finally reach? 22. Give account of fiery serpents. 23. The New Testament application. 24. Who was Balaam? 25. Where did Moses die?

CHAPTER XXXII.—1. Compare Aaron with Moses. 2. Where did Aaron meet Moses? 3. What part did Aaron perform? 4. How did the people receive his message? 5. What was Aaron's relation to Moses? 6. How did Aaron show his weakness? 7. Why was Aaron chosen High-priest? 8. How was the priest arrayed? 9. What is the Benediction? 10. How did the Lord show his acceptance of their offering? 11. What was the law on this point? 12. What was the sin of Nadab and Abihu? 13. Its punishment? 14. What probably led them into this sin? 10. What was the nature of Aaron's rebellion? 16. The result? 17. What revolt now took place? 18. How was it settled? 19. What proof did God give that He had chosen Aaron? 20. Describe Aaron's death. 21. His work and character.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—1. Who succeeded Moses? 2. What does his name mean? 3. Whom does he prefigure? 4. What command did he receive? 5. What encouragement? 6. What of the strength of Jericho? 7. Who received the spies? 8. What promise did they make her? 9. What report did they bring? 10. De-

scribe the crossing of the Jordan? 11. What feast was observed? 12. How were the people affected? 13. When did the manna cease? 14. What vision did Joshua have? 15. Describe the downfall of Jericho. 16. What of Rahab? 17. What place was next attacked? 18. With what result? 19. Why? 20. Define the sin of Achan 21. What was his punishment? 22. How was Ai taken? 23. Tell of the Gibeonites' deception. 24. How were they punished? 25. Who attacked them? 26. How was the victory won? 27. What wonderful miracle is here recorded? 28. What became of the confederate kings? 29. What were the remaining conquests of Joshua? 30. Describe his closing acts.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—1. What occurred after Joshua's death? 2. What beautiful story comes in here? 3. Where is the scene laid? 4. What family is mentioned? 5. Where did they go? 6. Why? 7. What happened them in the land of Moab? 8. What did Naomi resolve to do? 9. What did she advise her daughters-in-law to do? 10. Describe the scene. 11. What was Ruth's beautiful utterance? 12. What change had come over Naomi? 13. What was the exclamation of her friends? 14. What her answer? 15. Who was Boaz? 16. What was the law respecting gleaners? 17. What of Boaz' greeting to his servants? 18. How did he treat Ruth? 19. What was her question? 20. What favor did Boaz show her? 21. What instructions did Naomi give her? 22. What did Boaz promise? 23. How did he deal with his kinsman? 24. Describe the form of contract. 25. What blessing came to Ruth as the wife of Boaz.

CHAPTER XXXV.—1. What was always the result of Israel's idolatry? 2. Whom did God raise up for their deliverance? 3. Who brought them under his rule? 4. Who was their deliverer? 5. How did he manage his campaign? 6. How long did he judge Israel? 7. Who was the next enemy? 8. Who slew him, and how? 9. How did Ehud gather troops? 10. How many of the enemy were slain? 11. Who was the next enemy? 12. Who delivered Israel, and how? 13. What new enemy arose? 14. Whom did the Lord raise up to deliver His people? 15. What was Deborah's influence? 16. Who was called to lead the armies of Israel? 17. Where were they gathered? 18. Describe the battle. 19. How did Sisera meet death? 20. What of the song of Deborah and Barak?

CHAPTER XXXVI.—1. Who next overran Judea? 2. What do the names of their leaders suggest? 3. How did the Lord answer

them? 4. Who appeared to Gideon? 5. What was his message? 6. Gideon's reply? 7. What commission was given Gideon? 8. What miracle was performed? 9. What was Gideon's first act? 10. What did the people demand? 11. What new name was given Gideon? 12. What convincing signs were now given him? 13. How many men did he muster? 14. How many returned home? 15. How were his forces again reduced? 16. To what number? 17. What dream did he hear related? 18. How did he throw the enemy into confusion? 19. Describe the pursuit. 20. The triumphal return. 21. What of the close of his rule? 22. Who was Abimelech? 23. What awful crime did he commit? 24. Where was he made king? 25. Give the fable of the trees. 26. Who rose up against him? 27. What was his revenge? 28. How did he suffer death?

CHAPTER XXXVII.—1. Who succeeded Abimelech? 2. Who was Jair. 3. What of the people's idolatry? 4. Who was Jephthah? 5. What of his early life? 6. Why was he chosen leader? 7. On what condition did he accept leadership? 8. What gift of the Spirit came upon him? 9. What vow did he make? 10. What success to his campaign? 11. Who met him on his return? 12. Describe the scene. 13. What respite was granted his daughter? 14. Was the vow fulfilled? 15. What trouble now arose? 16. How were his enemies defeated? 17. Name the Judges between Jephthah and Samson. 18. Tell what is known of each. 19. What of Samson's birth? 20. Of his life as a Nazarite? 21. What happened at his marriage? 22. What was his revenge? 23. What did he next do? 24. Describe his surrender and final victory. 25. Recount his exploit at Gaza. 26. How did he lose his strength? 27. What did the Philistines do with him? 28. Tell of his death.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—1. At the death of a judge, who filled the office? 2. Who followed Samson? 3. What of his character? 4. Where and how long did he serve? 5. What two great men arose during his priesthood? 6. What their difference? 7. What was Eli's weakness? 8. Who assisted Eli as his deputies? 9. How did they use their office? 10. What judgment came to his house? 11. What enemy arose against Israel? 12. What did Israel do to defeat them? 13. With what effect? 14. How did Eli receive the news? 15. Who was Samuel? 16. What of his father and mother? 17. What is a Nazarite? 18. What of Han-

nah's song? 19. What of this family's religious habit? 20. Tell of Hannah's bringing Samuel to the tabernacle. 21. Give account of the Lord's appearing to Samuel. 22. How did Eli receive this message?

CHAPTER XXXIX.—1. What kind of men judged Israel? 2. To what class did Samuel belong? 3. How does his manner and method compare with the rest? 4. What trouble did the ark bring to the Philistines? 5. What did oppression lead the Israelites to do? 6. To whom did they turn? 7. What demand did Samuel make? 8. What did he then do? 9. How did Samuel prepare to meet the enemy? 10. How were the Philistines defeated? 11. What memorial was set up to mark the victory? 12. How long did Samuel continue to judge Israel? 13. Whom did Samuel appoint as his deputies? 14. What kind of men were they? 15 What did this lead Israel to do? 16. Where did Samuel have his seat of judgment? 17. What special act did he perform? 18. What saddened his closing years? 19. What were the leading features of his life? 20. What kind of schools did he establish? 21. What effect had his rule upon Israel? 22. How did he bridge over the nation from the theocracy to the monarchy? 23. What of his death?

CHAPTER XL.—1. What led the people to ask for a king? 2. By whose appointment do men rule? 3. Who was Saul? 4. Give full account of his anointing. 5. Describe the public choice. 6. Where was he when the lot was taken? 7. How was he greeted? 8. What eastern custom was observed? 9. How did Saul treat the slight? 10. How did he gather his army against the Ammonites? 11. What was the outcome in arms? 12. What the moral effect? 13. Describe the public inaugural. 14. What enemy arose? 15. How were they met? 16. What delayed the battle? 17. What was Saul's sin? 18. How was victory won? 19. What vow did the king make? 20. Who was next defeated? 21. What was done with the spoils of war? 22. Describe the meeting of Saul and Samuel? 23. Who was chosen as minstrel to the king? 24. What wicked deeds does the king now perform? 25. Describe the scene with the witch of Endor. 26. The last battle, with its results.

CHAPTER XLI.—1. What is the meaning of the name "David"? 2. What was the yearly custom at Bethlehem? 3. Who appeared? 4. For what purpose? 5. Describe the scene of choosing a king. 6. What two influences upon David's life? 7. With what effect?

8. What of Saul? 9. How was David brought before him? 10. What effect had his harp upon the king? 11. Who marched against Israel? 12. Who was the enemy's champion? 13. Describe him? 14. What effect had his challenge? 15 What brought David to camp? 16. What did he propose? 17. How was he armed? 18. What the result of battle? 19. What did Jonathan do? 20. What does his act symbolize? 21. What made the king jealous? 22. How did he treat David? 23. What cunning plot did he form? 24. Who first helped David to escape? 25. Who aided him a second time?

CHAPTER XLII.—1. Who furnished protection to David? 2. Where did he take refuge? 3. How did David spare Saul? 4. How, a second time? 5. Where did David settle? 6. What happened while he was with the king of Gath? 7. What victory did he win? 8. What took place at Hebron? 9. Whom did Abner proclaim king? 10. How was it proposed to settle the dispute? 11. With what result? 12. Who assembled at Hebron? 13. What place did David choose as his capital? 14. How did he strengthen it? 15. What of the Tabernacle? 16. What happened in its removal? 17. Describe the procession? 18. How did David sin in numbering the people? 19. Name some of his conquests. 20. What was the great sin of his life? 21. What was the great sorrow of his life?

CHAPTER XLIII.—1. Who was Solomon? 2. What is the meaning of his name? 3. The meaning of Jedidiah? 4. Where was he brought up? 5. How did Adonijah try to secure the throne? 6. How was Solomon crowned? 7. What of the end of Adonijah? 8. Whom did Solomon marry? 9. What offering did he make? 10. What was his petition? 11. What was granted him? 12. What commercial relations were established? 13. What great work did Solomon undertake? 14. What king aided him? 15. What of the building of the Temple? 16. How many years after its completion was it dedicated? 17. Describe the consecration. 18. The part of the people. 19. The sacrifice. 20. What was the nature of the new covenant? 21. What improvements did Solomon make? 22. What of his commerce? 23. Give account of the visit of Sheba. 24. What led Solomon to encourage idolatry? 25. What enemies rose up against him? 26. What of his death?

CHAPTER XLIV.—1. Name the old centers of Israel. 2. What change did David make? 3. Who led the opposing factions? 4. What was the immediate cause of revolt? 5. Where was Rehoboam inaugurated? 6. What demand was made of the new king? 7.

What was his answer? 8. What were the advantages of each? 9. What was the first act of violence? 10. How large an army did the king raise? 11. What kind of defence did he prepare? 12. Who invaded Judea? 13. With what effect? 14. What marks the decline of the kingdom? 15. What led Rehoboam into idolatry? 16. Who was made king of Israel? 17. What office had he held? 18. How did he strengthen himself? 19. How did he introduce idolatry? 20. Give account of the man of God reproving the king. 21. What new judgment fell upon him? 22. In the war with Judah, what was his loss? 23. What was his rank and character?

CHAPTER XLV.—1. What is the sum of history for half a century? 2. What the religious condition? 3. Who was chiefly responsible for it? 4. What great man did God raise up? 5. How is he described? 6. What message did he bring the king? 7. How was he fed in the wilderness? 8. Describe his visit to Zarephath. 9. How did Elijah meet the king? 10. And with what message? 11. Give account of the sacrifice of the priests of Baal. 12. Of Elijah's offering. 13. With what effect upon the people? 14. Upon the queen? 15. Where did the prophet go? 16. How was he fed? 17. How did God appear to him? 18. Tell all about Naboth. 19. What judgment did the prophet pronounce? 20. What of the death of Ahab and Jezebel? 21. Of Ahaziah's idolatry and doom? 22. What effort to seize Elijah and with what success? 23. Give account of Elijah's ascension.

CHAPTER XLVI.—1. Contrast Elijah with Elisha. 2. After Elijah was taken, what did Elisha do? 3. What did the sons of the prophets say? 4. What miracle did Elisha perform at Jericho? 5. How were the mocking youths reproved? 6. What occurred when Ahab died? 7. What kings were united in arms? 8. How did Elisha receive them? 9. What did he reveal to them? 10. Relate the miracle of the pot of oil. 11. What kindness was shown the prophet at Shunem? 12. How was it rewarded? 13. When the child died, what did the mother do? 14. Give Bible account of the restoration of the child. 15. How did Naaman the leper learn of the prophet? 16. What did his king do? 17. What did Elisha say? 18. What did the prophet propose as a cure? 19. How did Naaman receive his orders? 20. What did he finally do, and with what effect? 21. What then occurred? 22. Relate miracle of the axe-head. 23. Give account of the Syrian discomfiture. 24. Give incidents connected with the prophet's sickness and death.

CHAPTER XLVII.—1. What is known of the early life of Isaiah? 2. How many years did he prophesy? 3. What does his name mean? 4. What of his family? 5. How was he purified for the prophetic office? 6. What of his consecration of life? 7. In what condition was the country? 8. What was his strong declaration? 9. What nations arose against Judah? 10. To what was it the sequel? 11. What destruction wasted the land? 12. What was the promise? 13. In the dark hour, what was the hope? 14. What of the prophecies about the East? 15. What of the prophet's gifts? 16. Who threatened to overthrow the king's power? 17. What assurance did the prophet give? 18. In the hour of defeat, what did Hezekiah do? 19. How did God answer him? 20. What sad message did the prophet bring him? 21. With what effect? 22. What song of thanksgiving did the king compose? 23. What word of reproof did the prophet next bring him? 24. With what blessed announcement does he close his prophecy?

CHAPTER XLVIII.—1. What double office did Jeremiah fill? 2. How was he likely reared? 3. What was his nature? 4. What the evil of his times? 5. What was his commission? 6. What vision did he have? 7. What kind of life lay before him? 8. How was he affected by the king's death? 9. Under whose reign did his real work begin? 10. What two factions were there? 11. On which side was Jeremiah? 12. What prophecy did he utter? 13. With what direct effect? 14. Who were the Rechabites? 15. What lesson did their fidelity teach? 16. What new order came to Jeremiah? 17. What did the king do with the roll? 18. What did the prophet add to the new roll? 19. What vision did he now have? 20. How did the people treat him? 21. What prophecy did he next utter, and how? 22. What was done with Jeremiah? 23. What was his blessed prophecy? 24. How did he picture the coming bondage? 25. Where was he thrust? 26. How did he escape? 27. Where was he taken? 28. What had he been to his people? 29. How did they reward him?

CHAPTER XLIX.—1. What was the condition of things at this time? 2. Whom did God raise up? 3. Who was Ezekiel? 4. When did he prophesy? 5. What was his influence? 6. What kind of visions did he have? 7. What was his commission? 8. Tell the vision of the tile. 9. The meaning of lying first on one side and then on the other. 10. The coarse food. 11. What vision did he have of Jerusalem? 12 What did the order to scatter fire mean? 13. What promises were there? 14. Tell the parable of the trees.

15. Of the infant. 16. Of the eagles. 17. Of the lion's whelps. 18. What was the prophet's reply to the elders? 19. What is the parable of the burning forest? 20. The drawn sword? 21. The boiling pot? 22. The sudden death of his wife? 23. What did he prophesy about the surrounding nations? 24. What is the figure of the dry bones? 25. What kind of instructions were given for rebuilding the Temple? 26. What was the sum total of his mission.

CHAPTER L.—1. What Jewish lad was carried into captivity? 2. For what was he chosen? 3. What gifts had he for his work? 4. What preparation? 5. What traits marked the lad? 6. From what did he refrain? 7. What did he prefer? 8. What was his standing at the end of the term? 9. What was the nature of his prophecies? 10. What of the king's dream? 11. How did Daniel interpret it? 12. What dream did the king again have? 13. What of its meaning? 14. What happened at Belshazzar's feast? 15. How was Daniel honored? 16. What position did Darius give Daniel? 17. What plot did the other princes form? 18. How did Daniel treat the king's decree? 19. With what effect? 20. How was he saved from the lions? 21. What was the outcome? 22. What is the last glimpse we get of the prophet? 23. What is the nature of his prophecies?

CHAPTER LI.—1. Who was Ezra? 2. What noted work did he do? 3. With whom had he great power? 4. Where did he go? 5. What did he do then? 6. Whom did he take to Jerusalem? 7. What? 8. What was the first thing he did on arriving? 9. What next? 10. Describe their worship. 11. Who was Nehemiah? 12. What did he resolve to do? 13. What was his first step? 14. The next? 15. What appointment did he receive? 16. What did he then do? 17. On reaching the Holy City, what did he do? 18. What kind of opposition did he meet? 19. To what did his enemies resort? 20. How were they frustrated? 21. What plot did they form? 22. What reforms did Nehemiah make? 23. Who was Esther? 24. What trouble was there at the palace? 25. How did the king choose a new queen? 26. Whom did he choose? 27. What plot did Mordecai discover? 28. What decree did the king make? 29. How did Mordecai treat it? 30. What sentence did Haman secure? 31. How was the massacre of the Jews averted? 32. What became of Haman? Of Esther? Of Mordecai?

CHAPTER LII.—1. With whom does this series close? 2. Why called Minor? 3. When did they write? 4. What of Hosea? 5. What the theme of his prophecy? 6. What is known of Joel? 7. What the two-fold nature of his prophecy? 8. After rebukes, what does he promise? 9. Who was Amos? 10. What is the nature of his reproof? 11. Of his promises? 12. What does Obadiah mean? 13. Against whom does he prophecy? 14. How does he close his book? 15. Tell the story of Jonah? 16. Who was Micah? 17. What particular does he foretell? 18. Where did Nahum come from? 19. Against what city did he prophesy? 20. What is the special character of the Book of Habakkuk? 21. What promise does he give? 22. How does his book close? 23. Who was Zephaniah? 24. What of his prophecy? 25. What is here said of the rebuilding of the Temple? 26. What was the theme of Haggai's prophecy? 27. Who was Zechariah? 28. What was his warning? 29. What of his visions? 30. What of Malachi's prophecy? 32. Whom did he foretell?

APPENDIX.

MEMORY WORK FOR THE SCHOLAR.

It is important that the Memory Work engaged in by the scholar, in connection with the Graded Series, should not cease.

Let the teacher assign, one week ahead of the teaching of the lesson, the following Memory Passages, which gather up the spiritual substance of the lesson, and which are to be committed to memory by the scholar in connection with each lesson, and frequently to be reviewed.

I.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.—Luke 1: 68-69.

II.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke 2: 10-11.

III.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved.—John 3: 16-17.

IV.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.—John 5: 24.

V.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.—Matt. 5: 7, 8, 9.

VI.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.—Matt. 11: 28-29.

VII.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.—John 11: 25-26.

VIII.

Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.—Mark 14: 38.

IX.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.—John 20: 29.

X.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.—Gal. 5: 22-23.

XI.

God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.—Acts 10: 34-35.

XII.

Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.—I John 4: 10.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.—I John 5: 4.

XIII.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.—John 13: 16.

XIV.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—Rev. 2: 10.

But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.—Acts 8: 20.

XV.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.—I Cor. 15: 23.

XVI.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.—I Cor. 2: 2.

XVII.

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.—Acts 9: 22.

XVIII.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being.—Acts 17: 24, 28.

XIX.

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.—Acts 20: 35.

XX.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. —II Tim. 4: 7-8.

XXI.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.—II Cor. 2: 14.

XXII.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.—Gen. 3: 15.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.—Heb. 11: 4.

XXIII.

And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.—Gen. 9: 11.

XXIV.

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.—Gen. 12: 2.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed: and he went out, not knowing whither he went.—Heb. 11: 8.

XXV.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.—Heb. 11: 17.

XXVI.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.—Gal. 4: 28-29.

XXVII.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.—Gen. 28: 16-17.

XXVIII.

But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.—Gen. 39: 21.

XXIX.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.—Gen. 49: 10.

XXX.

The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation: my father's God, and I will exalt him.—Ex. 15: 2.

XXXI.

The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.—Num. 14: 18.

XXXII.

And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.—Ex. 33: 14.

XXXIII.

Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.—Joshua 24: 14.

XXXIV.

And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.—Ruth 1: 16-17.

XXXV.

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.—Judges 5: 31.

XXXVI.

And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.—Judges 6: 23.

XXXVII.

And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.—Judges 10: 15.

XXXVIII.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.—I Sam. 2: 6-7.

XXXIX.

And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.—I Sam. 7: 8.

XL.

Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.—I Sam. 12: 24.

XLI.

But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.—I Sam. 16: 7.

XLII.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.—Ps. 51: 1-2.

XLIII.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad.—I Kings 3: 9.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.—Ps. 111: 10.

XLIV.

And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.—II Chron. 12: 14.

XLV.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.—I Kings 18: 39.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. —James 5: 16.

XLVI.

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.—II Kings 2: 11.

XLVII.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.—Isa. 53: 4.

XLVIII.

In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.—Jeremiah 23: 6.

XLIX.

I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them.—Ezekiel 20: 19.

L.

Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.—Dan. 12: 10.

LI.

O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name.—Neh. 1: 11.

LII.

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.—Mal. 4: 1-2.

Captivity of the Kingdom

Year B.C.	King of Jo	Assyr. Empire	People carried away	Localities
771	Manasseh	Paul	Reuben Gad	Nineveh
740	Pekah	Tiglath Pileser	Gilead	Galilee Media
721	Hoshea	Shalmaneser	all Israel	

Captivity of Judea

Year B.C.	King of Judea	Babylonian Empire	Localities
607	Jehoiakim	Nebuchadnezzar	Babylon
599	Jehoiachin	Nebuchadnezzar	Babylon
588	Zedekiah	Nebuchadnezzar	Babylon

town right after supper & write me
so I can get some of my
pictures

what was it you said that Esther said
about christmas & the Glee Club about
sticking up with her
what I was saying was that she stuck up
for Christmas & that spat about the
rings
& she didn't even have any thing to do
about it